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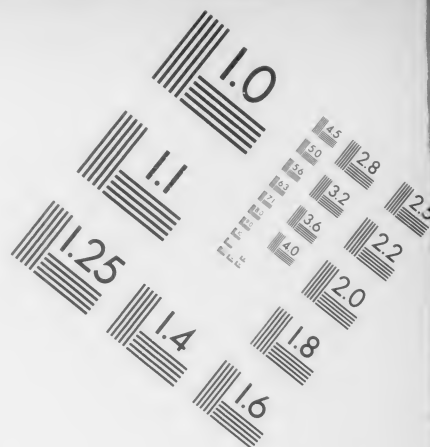
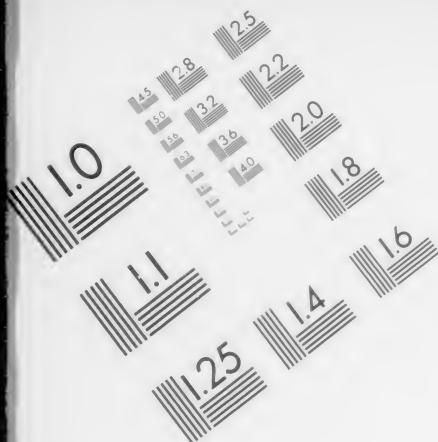


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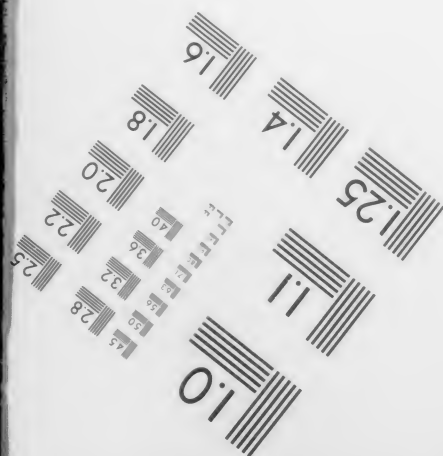
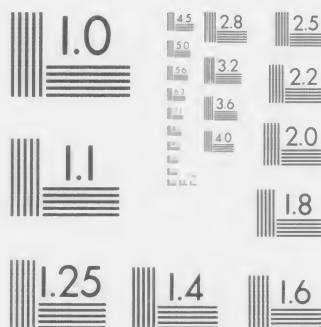
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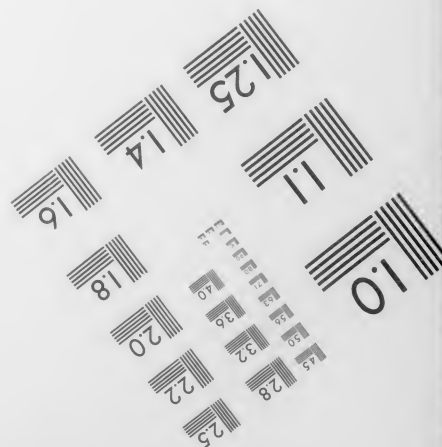
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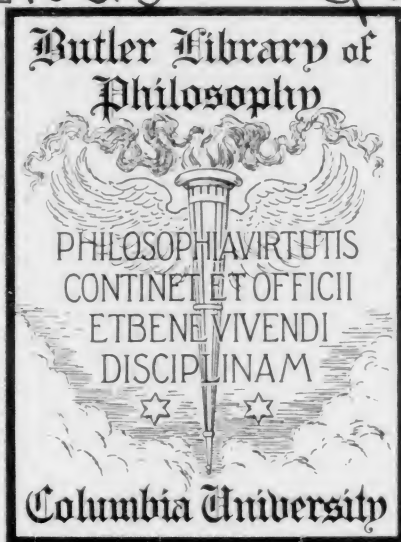
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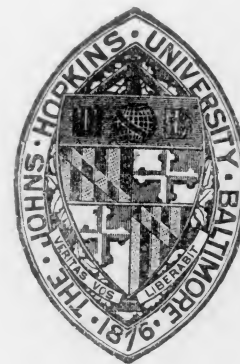
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THREE STUDIES IN
CURRENT PHILOSOPHICAL
QUESTIONS

Griffin, E. H.



BALTIMORE
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MARCH, 1914

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THE
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UNIVERSITY CIRCULAR

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The Department of Philosophy having been invited to be responsible for the contents of this issue of the University Circular, it has seemed that the opportunity might perhaps best be utilized by the publication of two or three brief studies illustrative of certain of the questions in theoretical philosophy which have of late especially engaged the attention of members of the Department. Part of the first paper, and the second and third, deal, from the points of view of their respective authors, with phases of a single issue which has been especially prominent in recent philosophical discussion in England and America. The two last-mentioned papers present, in simplified form, part of the material of a course on "The Conception of Consciousness in the Light of Recent Theories" given by the writers in collaboration during the current year. The first paper was originally delivered before the Huxley Society of the University.

SOME PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

BY EDWARD H. GRIFFIN

*Professor of the History of Philosophy and Dean of the
College Faculty*

Let us imagine the case of a person of good understanding, not trained in the technicalities of philosophy, knowing nothing of schools and systems, whose interest in these subjects has in some way been aroused and who wishes to reach a satisfactory view of himself and his relation to the world from the standpoint of philosophy. The attention of such a person would of course be attracted by certain familiar terms—idealism, realism, absolutism, pragmatism, pluralism. He asks himself, "What do these mean? What truth is in them? Does any one of these commend itself to me as valid and reasonably adequate? Or, can I borrow elements from several, or from each of them, and reach a composite or eclectic result?" It is easy to imagine an intelligent and thoughtful person undertaking such an inquiry; no doubt many persons have done, and are doing it.

I. Perhaps the word realism would be as attractive to him as any of these terms. "Reality—that is what I am after, that is what I want to get. What is realism?"

Our inquirer discovers, very readily, that realism is intended to signify the existence of the objects of our experience independently of our knowledge of them. That doubtless would seem to him reasonable. "Of course," he says, "objects exist independently of my knowledge. That chair is in this room, whether I know it or not. It was in the room before I entered, and will be in it after I go out." Nothing would seem to be more plain than that the existence of objects is not constituted by, or dependent upon, anyone's

knowing them. The human race has inhabited this earth a comparatively short time, but for unnumbered ages before the advent of man the earth existed and passed through its geologic changes, though there was no one to be aware of them.

Yet, evident as this is, a moment's reflection shows our inquiring friend that the matter is not quite so simple as, at first thought, it seems. The chair, as I perceive it, is a complex of qualities, each of which is apprehended through one of my senses. It has a certain size and shape, and hardness and smoothness, and color, and odor, and temperature, and weight, and sound (if I should strike it), etc. Some if not all of these qualities evidently imply the presence of an observer. How can there be color if there is no one to see it; or sound if there is no one to hear it; or odor if there is no one to smell it; or roughness and smoothness if there is no one to touch it; or heat and cold if there is no one capable of these sensations? Even in the case of those qualities which seem to belong to the very nature of a material body, such as extension and impenetrability, these vary with the perceiver. An insect must get a very different idea of size and shape and hardness and motion from that of a man. All qualities—those that are invariably present as truly as those that may, or may not, be present—are forms of our consciousness, subjective states, determinations contributed by our minds. The first hasty conclusion must therefore be modified. Not the qualities as we perceive them, exist independently of our knowledge, but causes capable of producing the qualities. The vibrations of the atmosphere, the waves of ether, exist objectively, and are so related to our physical and psychical organism as to produce in us sensations of sound and of color. A world of physical energies exists, independently of us, and we are so constituted as to be capable of interpreting these energies in the form of the various sense qualities.

The objection may suggest itself that this is assuming a causal relation between things essentially unlike. Physical

energies and conscious states are very different; how can one be the cause of the other? But decisive weight can hardly be allowed to this objection when due consideration is given to the disparity between causes and effects which we constantly observe. Friction produces sound, and heat, and flame, and color. Electrical causes produce physiological effects. Threatening clouds, or violent winds, inspire fear. We cannot say that the non-conscious is incapable of acting causally upon the conscious. There is nothing irrational, or contrary to experience, in affirming that "matter" conceived dynamically, as the physicist conceives it, is directly effective in producing psychical states.

Our intelligent inquirer would doubtless take note of the fact that the conscious states, on the one hand, and the physical energies, on the other, are, respectively, interrelated. States of consciousness are not isolated one from another, but are connected by ties of association and memory; they form a continuum, a coherent whole. The occurrences of the physical world also stand to each other in definite relations of interdependence, which make it possible to foresee and to account for them. It would seem reasonable, therefore, to assume some substantive principle of unity and permanence, in each case. The psychical processes and the physical processes would seem alike to point to some kind of being underlying them. The terms "mind" and "matter" serve to designate these contrasted forms of being. Realism therefore means that a conscious reality, mind, or self, has over against it a non-conscious reality—a world of material objects—which it is capable of knowing, to a greater or less extent, but which exists independently of this knowledge.

Our unsophisticated inquirer would soon discover that this result, satisfactory as it seems, is not exempt from criticism. Because it recognizes two realities—mind and matter, ideas and things—it is described as dualism; and only a very slight acquaintance with philosophical literature is necessary to make it clear that this is a term of ill repute. The dualism

between mind and body, bequeathed by Descartes as an unsolved problem; the dualism between thought and things, which as formulated by Locke furnished the occasion for the immaterialism of Berkeley; these are held to be serious, if not fatal, difficulties inherent in any and every form of dualistic theory. It is considered necessary to get rid of the superficial and misleading conception of the world as divided into the material and the spiritual, and to think of it as of one kind. How this is to be done, is the problem.

Our would-be philosopher would probably suspect that there is only one way—through the elimination of one or the other of the two terms—but not being prepared to discard either mind or matter, he would be ready to listen attentively to any suggestion that might seem to offer relief from an alternative so unwelcome. Having given in his adhesion, provisionally at least, to realism, he would naturally be attracted by the current doctrine known as the "new realism." "Here," he might say to himself, "is very likely to be found the thing which I am in search of—a modern version of the common sense belief in a world of independently existing material objects, so stated as to avoid the criticisms which are thought to weigh so heavily against the old-fashioned formulation of that opinion." If we may imagine him, in his desire for first-hand information, to undertake the perusal of the volume published under the title "The New Realism," he would come upon many passages which would be likely to occasion him perplexity. Here, for example: "Realism holds¹ that things known may continue to exist unaltered when they are not known, or that things may pass in and out of the cognitive relation without prejudice to their reality, or that the existence of a thing is not correlated with or dependent upon the fact that anybody experiences it, perceives it, conceives it, or is in any way aware of it." "Is not correlated with, or dependent upon the fact that anybody is aware of it." But the chair cannot exist, as such, apart from a perceiving

¹ *The New Realism*, p. 474 (Montague).

mind. It possesses certain qualities, and is intended for certain uses, which presuppose intelligence. If there is no being in the universe who can experience these qualities, or form any idea of these uses, how can it exist as a chair? The assertion must be meant to apply only to the moment of perception. In the intervals of perception, the various elements and forces must continue to exist, as we all suppose them to do, in a purely physical way, capable of being recognized as a chair, but not discerned as such. The meaning must be that when these objective physical data are construed in consciousness as a chair no new form of being is introduced; there is no entrance upon the scene of an extra-physical agency which we may call "mind," possessing certain powers by virtue of which it interprets these physical data in terms of sense-feeling, and sets them in intellectual relations of space and time and number and causality and the like, forming an "idea" of the object which stands over against it, as its psychical representative or equivalent, so that we have two forms or orders of being, matter and mind, the object known and the subject knowing. "According to this view, instead of there being a fundamental dual division of the world into ideas and things, there is only the class of things: ideas being the sub-class of those things which happen to be known. That which is commonly called the 'object' of knowledge merges with the idea."² In the moment of perception, then, the object and the idea are one and the same. Physical elements when reacted to by the central nervous system—the brain and the sense organs—become mental content. It is a physical transaction entirely. The object is the idea; the idea is the object. "Ideas are only things in a certain relation; things, in respect of being known are ideas." (It should be observed that this is termed a doctrine of "epistemological monism": it is a theory about knowledge, and not about being or existence. One may hold any metaphysics one pleases, but it is argued that knowledge may be accounted

² Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 126.

for without the assumption of any form of being except that which we commonly designate as material).

Obviously, the essential point here is the view taken of the nature and function of consciousness. It is denied that consciousness contributes anything. "Consciousness"—to use a phrase of the late Professor James—"does not denote a special stuff or way of being." "There is, I believe, no aboriginal stuff or quality of being, contrasted with that of which material objects are made, out of which our thoughts of them are made."³ Consciousness is variously described as "a species of function exercised by an organism"; "a certain context or grouping of objects"; "a type of behavior"—not something to be inferred from behavior, but the behavior itself. A favorite characterisation is in the use of the word "relation." Consciousness is conceived as a relation between things which makes a synthesis of meaning possible. When physical objects—as the chair—and my central nervous system are brought together, a new relation arises, or may arise—that of being known, the relation of "meaning," of "awareness," of "consciousness." This is strictly a property of the physical organism. It is a reaction of the highly organized and highly specialized brain structures to a material excitation or stimulus. Mind is not a substance, or entity, as it was to Descartes and Locke; it is not even a series of states, as it was to Hume; it is a property or function of the brain which manifests itself under certain conditions, so that we may more properly say that consciousness inheres in its objects than that its objects inhere in it. As Professor Montague explains: "The idealist cuts out the self-subsistent world of material bodies in space and leaves only the spaceless realm of minds and their ideas and states. The monistic realist retains that world, and leaves out the 'minds' or 'ideas.' He is monistic in his epistemology because he believes in only one system of realities, the realities in space and time; he is realistic because he believes that

³ *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, I, 477.

no object forfeits its objective or self-existent character by chancing to stand in the conscious relation. . . . Consciousness is a relation existing in a material nature along with other relations, and, like them, describable ultimately in terms of the basic relations of time and space."⁴

Now, would an ordinary sensible man, devoid of prepossessions of any kind, be likely to assent to this statement of the case? Let us pay him the compliment of supposing him superior to any of the prejudices which might be excited by such a word as "materialistic." We will suppose him duly aware of the fact that epithets are not arguments, and we will suppose him also to realize that, as we do not know what "matter" is, in its ultimate reality, it is not worth while to be too dogmatic about names. He simply takes the facts and asks, what do they seem to signify? If consciousness be, as Professor Montague tells us, "a relation existing in a material nature along with other relations," it must be admitted to be unique in this respect, that it is only through it that the other relations are known. The various objects and persons in this room make up an aggregate of physical relations existing, apart from my knowledge, in *rerum natura*; when under the appropriate conditions, the relation of consciousness is introduced, all these objects and persons became known. Is that which discloses the objects on a parity with, and of the same kind as, the objects disclosed? The light which reveals objects is not itself one of the objects which it reveals. Consciousness, we are told by Professor Woodbridge, is meaning; "A world without consciousness is a world without meaning. Add consciousness, and then meaning is added and nothing else."⁵ But is not that enough? A world of material forms and forces signifying nothing: all this transfigured and seen to be instinct with

⁴"Contemporary Realism and the Problems of Perception," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, IV, 374.

⁵Woodbridge, "The Problem of Consciousness," in the volume commemorative of Professor Garman.

order and harmony and beauty. Is this transformation so slight a thing that that through which it is accomplished may be properly classified as one of the physical existences whose significance it discerns? It is said that consciousness is not constitutive of objects. But if it give objects all their meaning, is it not constitutive?

In the article just referred to, Professor Woodbridge urges that the conception of mind as "an end term": *i. e.*, an ultimate form of reality, the source of relations, rather than itself a relation, is inconsistent with the view of the world as the product of evolution. "The sense of a vast and unfolding nature, which science deepens within us, puts under suspicion those philosophies which seek to explain the world primarily from the initial fact that man happens to be conscious of a small part of it." Is not this a mechanistic and Spencerian view? Are we obliged to exclude the possibility of the appearance of anything new, *i. e.*, not explainable in terms of what has preceded, in the cosmical process? If, at last, whether it be derivable from what has preceded or not, a being, or an agent, or a relation—whatever it be—appears, possessing the power of intelligently apprehending what has gone forward during the long travail of time, looking back upon it, in scientific interpretation, forecasting it in astronomic computation, or in the verified hypotheses of induction, giving it the meaning which hitherto it has not had, is it not better to interpret the world from the point of view of this superior, this transcendent, product, using its norms and analogies, rather than to remain upon the lower plane, using the norms and analogies of what we call matter?

It is difficult to expound this view of consciousness, as a relation subsisting between physical elements, without using language inconsistent with it. Man is more and more asserting his mastery over nature. The mind not only apprehends the facts and laws of the world in which it is placed, but it uses these facts and laws for the attainment of its ends; it manifests initiative as well as understanding; emotions,

ideals, aspirations, convictions, self-sacrifices—all these elements and manifestations of what, for want of a better word, we call personality, go to make up the content of experience and demand explanation. "Is there such a thing," asks Professor Perry, "as moral causality? Are there cases of determination by moral as well as by mechanical law?"⁶ In answering this question in the affirmative, declaring unambiguously that "there is sufficient ground, in reason and in fact, for asserting that interests operate, that things take place because of the good they promote; this is the meaning of freedom, both as an actuality and as a prerogative. I can and do, within limits, *act as I will*; action is in a measure governed by desires and intentions"—in saying this, going beyond the sphere of perception, where the theory may be applied with less difficulty, into that of moral feeling and moral action, expanding the theory into a Philosophy of Life, the advocate of the new realism seems to involve himself in contradiction. How can a relation between physical elements, that which is a mere response to material environment, exercise these preferential, self-determining powers, elect between alternatives, exalt itself above that out of which it has arisen and to which it pertains?

I will not follow our imaginary inquirer into the details of the investigations which he may be supposed further to pursue. The point so cogently urged by Professor Lovejoy, that dreams, illusions, hallucinations, have just as definite a content, while they last, as real perceptions have, though there is no actual object present,—the psychical state being independent of the object which the relational theory requires—this, and the further fact that this difficulty is not confined to illusions alone, that it arises whenever we interpret data that are doubtful: these and other difficulties and objections may be left unconsidered.

The point is: Is this account of consciousness consistent with the facts? Are the objections to the belief of common

⁶ *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 341.

sense, that there is a fundamental duality in our experience, so grave that we do well to exchange them for the difficulties inherent in this view? It is just as important to distinguish things which differ as it is to bring together things that are alike. Monism does away with some perplexing problems, but it may substitute for them others which are worse. The good sense of the world has declined to accept monism in the Berkeleyian form: it may be that it will not be satisfied with the antithesis to Berkeley presented by the new realists.

II. If we may suppose our inquirer to have made up his mind to accept what seems to be the testimony of consciousness to the existence of a world of real objects existing independently of our knowledge—correcting indeed, the realism of naïve common sense by distinguishing between the sense data which exist extra-mentally, and the interpretation which we put upon them—i. e., the percept which is a construction of our minds,—and, also, declining to be persuaded by the new realists to explain away the function of mind in order to establish "epistemological monism,"—we may imagine his attention to be next directed to the questions which have been so much discussed during the past few years, under the name "pragmatism." This, like "realism," as an attractive word, being akin to "practice" and "practical," and suggesting, as means to the determination of truth, the appeal to experience. The points at issue have become so familiar even to the reader of periodical literature, that it is not unlikely that our friend would be slightly weary of the subject, perhaps inclined to dispose of it summarily. He would doubtless distinguish the two senses in which pragmatism may be understood: (a) as a theory in regard to the nature of truth, and (b) as a statement of the criterion which may be employed in order to determine what is truth. Pragmatism assumes the facts of sense perception and of self-consciousness—the materials which are given us as objects of immediate knowledge. These are not properly characterized as true or false. Truth and falsity pertain to propositions,

to assertions in regard to facts, not to facts in themselves considered. When our affirmations or denials correspond to, correctly represent the nature of, the objects to which they relate, they are said to be true: when they do not thus correspond, they are said to be false. If one wishes to define truth, what can one do better than say something like this: Truth is a correct representation of reality? But the pragmatist defines truth in terms of its effects, as that which works satisfactorily, which performs what is expected of it, as only "the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as the right is only the expedient in our way of behaving."⁷ In order to make this even momentarily plausible, it is necessary to expand the meaning of "expedient," and "working satisfactorily" by such qualifications as "on the whole," "in the long run," "all things considered"; but, even after that is done, have we a definition of truth? No doubt that which works well "all things considered," "in the long run," and "on the whole" is true, but is it true because it works in this way, or does it work in this way because it is true? If we invert the proper order of the true and the useful and give precedence to "useful"—with whatever extension of meaning—we derogate from the dignity and the authority of truth, because we find its essence to consist, not in its relation to reality, but in the value of its consequences. We do not mean by truth that which works well in practice, but that which correctly represents the nature of that with which it has to do.

I do not think that unprejudiced common sense is likely to allow much weight to the pragmatic contention so far as it relates to the nature of truth. If the claim is more modest and it is urged only that the consequences of a belief or opinion may be properly taken as a test or criterion of its truth, one is less likely to dissent. But even this must not be pushed too far. It is obvious that the test of consequences does not apply everywhere. In pure mathematics, for in-

⁷ James, *Pragmatism*, p. 222.

stance, and wherever we are dealing with abstract relations, with idealities of thought, there are no objective consequences; the criterion there is self-evidence, intellectual consistency. Even in respect to concrete things, the test is not universally applicable. In strictness it applies only where experiment is possible. I can test the truth of the assertion that heat expands bodies by simply trying it. I can test the truth of any hypothesis by an appeal to consequences, provided I can exclude what the logicians call the "plurality of causes." In this way I can assure myself that when it is said that the atmosphere presses with a certain force per square inch upon all bodies on the surface of the earth, the proposition is true. But if I cite the prosperity which follows a certain change in the tariff as proving the wisdom of the legislation, my argument is invalid unless I can show that there is nothing else which could conceivably occasion that prosperity. When we pass beyond the sphere of experiment and verifiable hypothesis, the test of consequences is much less easily applied. "There is one God and Mohammed is his prophet." It was not the truth in this rallying cry, but the lie, that nerved the Mohammedan hosts. The Mohammedan victories do not prove the truth of the assertion, but only the fitness of this belief to win victories. There can be no doubt that if I believe that pain is an illusion, I shall bear it better, but the fact that I bear it better because I think there is no such thing does not prove that there is no such thing, but only that this belief is serviceable, under certain circumstances and to a certain extent. The useful consequences which attend a given belief may prove only that the state of mind which the belief indicates or induces acts favorably. I may be cured by bread pills, or by a physician who has no professional competence, if I have confidence in the pills or in the practitioner, but that does not show that there is any virtue in either.

"On pragmatic principles," says Professor James, "we cannot safely reject any hypothesis if consequences useful to

life flow from it." ^s Can we venture to say this? Certainly not unless we have such a very wide knowledge of the consequences that we are certain what their summation is; there may be good consequences which are undeniable, but these may be balanced by bad consequences which we do not happen to perceive. In any case, have we a right to assume that utility always accompanies truth? That it does not constitute truth, we may perhaps agree: does it always certify to it? If utility is taken in a sufficiently comprehensive sense, one may say *yes*; it can hardly be supposed that what is, upon the whole, useful is false. But as a practical maxim in life it does not seem to me that the pragmatic criterion is very valuable beyond the sphere of experiment. It may be very hard to tell, in the case of a philosophical or religious tenet, or even in the case of an historical institution, like the Papacy, what the balance of consequences is. There are other criteria that may be more advantageously employed. In the case of the most sacred beliefs of mankind, it is surely unfitting to seek to establish them upon merely utilitarian grounds. The criticism of J. S. Mill, in his posthumous essay, "The Utility of Religion," may be commended to the consideration of all Christian apologists. Because a belief in God and the future life is consolatory to persons in distress: because religion is a useful social restraint—it does not follow that God exists, or that religion is true. Truth is a correct representation of reality, and not merely something which works well. It is peculiarly incumbent upon those who represent the higher, ideal interests of mankind to bear this distinction in mind.

What, then, would be our friend's verdict upon Pragmatism? Perhaps this. It does not correctly conceive the nature of truth, but it renders a valuable service in fixing attention upon one of its most important proofs—one which we continually apply in real life, and which, in its proper sphere, is altogether indispensable. In preaching the gospel

^s James, *Pragmatism*, p. 273.

of efficiency, it makes itself the mouthpiece of the current sentiment of our time, and it enforces the salutary lesson that every individual, and every social institution, should be held to account for producing results commensurate with the powers and opportunities possessed. In so far as there is an over-emphasis, and the impression is conveyed that there is no criterion of truth except that of consequences, and encouragement is given to the employment of utilitarian considerations, where these are inapplicable, the doctrine is misleading, and, in greater or less degree, mischievous.

III. Thus far, our neophyte has been dealing with what may be called *particulars* of experience. He has asked what manner of existence is to be attributed to the objects which make up the material world, whether they exist only as ideas in the mind of the recipient, or independently of his knowledge; and, if independently, whether the perceiving mind has a substantive being over against, as it were, the material objects, or is, in some way, identical with, or merged in, them. He has asked, also, about the knowledge which we have of these objects—how it should be defined, and whether it is to be obtained exclusively through the employment of the methods and the criteria of experimentation.

But his thought would surely take a wider range than this. The things and the persons of our experience do not present themselves to us in isolation from one another, but as inter-related. The significance of the individual object is seen to consist, not merely in what it is, but in what it is capable of doing or becoming in its relation to other individuals. The most unreflecting cannot remain content with details; he must rise, in speculation and imagination, to some conception of a whole of things: questions, more or less articulate, must suggest themselves in regard to the Universe as a complex or totality. The "plain man," "the man in the street," as the phrases are, has a world view, as well as the philosopher.

In seeking to satisfy those "obstinate questionings" about

the Ground and Meaning of the world, which must sometimes vex the minds even of the most thoughtless, we may suppose our friend to make trial of the philosophical doctrine commonly known as "absolutism." This would commend itself to him on several grounds. In reacting, as we have seen—or as we have assumed—him to do, against the virtual elimination of mind by the new realists, and, at the same time, insisting upon the veritable and independent reality of material things, he has combined elements of theory which, in their extreme forms, are antagonistic, but which may perhaps admit of being reconciled. "I do not doubt that anything which can ultimately *be*, must be of the nature of mind or experience, and therefore that reality must ultimately be conceived after this manner."⁹ This is the language of Berkeley, but with a difference. This present day exponent of absolutism proceeds: "But to pass from this ultimate conviction to the idea that finite minds are the sole vehicles and determinants of teleology apart from a 'nature'—a relatively external and mechanical system by which their content is defined and their individuality manifested—this seems to me as serious an error as that of the mechanistic view itself." And again (p. 361) "Nature is the world in space and time, abstracted from our momentary attitude and considered as self-existent, though at the same time held to be possessed of qualities which presuppose it to be in relation with a cognitive, sentient, purposive, and emotional being." Here we have a recognition of the constitutive function of mind in knowledge, combined with the recognition of a genuine world of real objectivity. The mind which is the ground and essence of reality is not the finite mind; matter is not the ideas of the individual consciousness. So far as we are concerned, the material world is an extra-mental fact, existing in independence of our minds, though not in independence of all mind. The duality of experience is thus fully provided for.

⁹ Bernard Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 135.

but the unmediated dualism, which to many persons seems so objectionable a feature of the ordinary realism, is transcended. Besides the advantage of thus bringing together an idealistic metaphysic and a realistic doctrine of perception, this form of world-theory has the further advantage of providing for a true Universe. It brings all things under one all-inclusive, all comprehending Mind, the all Knowing, Absolute Thought or Self. It thus satisfies the instinctive demand, alike of scientific intelligence and aesthetic feeling, for order, unity, and harmony. The aspect of the world upon which it most delights to dwell is its rationality. Moreover, it makes its appeal to ethical feeling also, in that it enthrones spirit over matter, exalts the concept of personality, at least as it views personality, construes ultimate reality in terms of ideal perception. Many have found in this form of idealism a valuable ally of religion. Our inquiring friend would doubtless be impressed by the imposing list of theologians, and theologically-minded philosophers, who have employed it in this way. The first work of Professor Royce which attracted general attention, "The Religious Aspect of Philosophy," was an interpretation of Hegelianism from this point of view. An optimistic view of the world naturally goes with this philosophy. The absolute and all-thinking Mind takes up all discords and oppositions into itself and reconciles them. Whatever the surface appearances may be, at the heart of things abides a central peace.

It is not strange that a doctrine which has so much to commend it should have numbered so many adherents, and we may be sure that a thoughtful and impartial seeker after truth would give serious consideration to its claims. A question or misgiving might suggest itself, growing out of the prominence given, in the characterisation of the Absolute, to the knowing attribute. Thought is consecutive and concatenated—we speak of a *chain* of reasoning: if the relation of the Absolute to the finite universe is analogous to that of the thinker to his thought, if the development of the cosmos

is akin to the working out of a process of logic, there seems to be no room left in the world for alternatives, for the entrance of anything new, for the free choice of personal beings. Furthermore, the connotation given to the attribute "eternal," meaning, not duration throughout all time, but timelessness, existence out of time, seems to identify the real with the changeless, and thus to deny to the world of temporal change the character of reality. The "timeless" character on which absolutism lays so much stress takes the Absolute out of our cognizance or realization. Whatever harmonizing of discords, and rectifying of injustices, there may be, takes place in this supra-temporal sphere, and it is hard to see how it can bring any alleviation to the ills of our actual human lot. If, by any chance, our inquirer could be supposed to have acquaintance with Spinoza, he would be struck by the numerous points of resemblance between the two systems: in particular he would note the number of familiar words used, by the absolutists, and by the great seventeenth century exponent of pantheism, in unfamiliar senses. Such words as God, Self, Spirit, Will, person, freedom, good and evil, bear a very different sense in Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian usage from that which we are accustomed to give them, and a strict scrutiny of the way in which they are used divests the system of much of its first attractiveness. A sense of vagueness and unreality, of inapplicability to real problems, arises in our minds. The conception of the world as a unified whole, the product and expression of an Infinite Reason: the insistence upon spirit as ultimately real, upon "self-consciousness," to quote the words of Mr. Bosanquet, "as the clue to the Typical Structure of Reality"; these postulates seem to promise a metaphysical construction satisfactory alike to the man of science and to the theologian, but as wrought out by the leading representatives of the school—both English and American—they invite criticism from both sides, since science assumes the reality of time and of physical changes, and ethics and religion demand a much more ex-

plicit recognition of the volitional elements of experience than this intellectualistic metaphysic concedes.

Upon the whole, our inquirer may be imagined to have a divided mind, to recognise some features of this absolutist system as true and fine and suggestive, and others as dubious. A semi-mystical elevation of sentiment, such as one finds in Spinoza, compels his admiration, while an underlying feeling of questioning and discontent remains.

IV. And so it is not strange that he should lend a listening ear to a type of doctrine which has become current of recent years, to which the name Personalism has been applied—sometimes known also as Humanism (a name given it by F. C. S. Schiller, one of its English exponents, which has the advantage of being the antithesis of naturalism, of suggesting an interpretation of the universe in terms of man, rather than of nature), known also, still more descriptively, as Pluralism. Putting several terms together, we may call it pluralistic, personal idealism.

The pluralistic personal idealist holds that all reality is of the nature of mind, and that self, or individual, or person, or some such word, may be properly employed to express its nature, but that, instead of being unified in One Absolute Self, Individual or Person, the universe consists of a community of related selves. The primitive state, if we may use such an expression, must be conceived as a totality of unique individuals, each possessing a certain *conatus sese conservandi*—an impulse toward self-preservation or self-realization. This revolt from Absolutism is described by James Ward thus: "The twentieth century opens with the attempt to work out the idealistic interpretation, not in the old way as essentially a devolution of the One, but rather—as far as possible—to represent it as an evolution of the Many. In England, in America, in France, even in Germany—once the stronghold of Absolutism—systems of pluralism are more or less rife."¹⁰ Professor James expressed the contrast between

¹⁰ James Ward: *The Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism*, p. 49.

Absolutism and Pluralism by saying that the one explains parts by wholes, and the other explains wholes by parts, the one conceives reality under the "all-form," the other under the "each form." The student of philosophy will be at once reminded of Leibnitz: one not thus provided with a historical analogue will soon discover that the conception is something like this: Innumerable personal beings, each acting out its own individual impulses: these impulses becoming more and more concurrent and co-operative under the operation of natural laws of selection, imitation, custom, tradition, social institutions of various kinds, conserving what has been gained, and making possible an approximately continuous progress: so that a relatively coherent whole may be realised as the result of the independent action of individuals, each of whom is absolutely undetermined by any power outside itself: the Universe thus being not the expression of the Thought of an Absolute but the resultant of forces proceeding from each of the beings making up the totality of the community of selves. This is not necessarily an atheistic doctrine: many, if not most, of the pluralistic idealists are theists, as Leibnitz was; but the sphere of the Divine agency is limited: God is not unqualifiedly Sovereign, but *primus inter pares*: the self-contradictory expression "a finite God,"—first employed, in criticism of the pluralistic doctrine, by its opponents—has been sometimes employed by them as an emphatic way of affirming the existence of unresolved, indeterminate elements or factors in the universe, potentialities of personality, lying outside the Divine power or the Divine knowledge.

This extreme emphasis upon the individual is of course a protest against the all-absorbing monism of the absolutist. It is an affirmation of the genuine autonomy of finite selves, conceiving them as spiritual entities and not mere functions or aspects of the One Sole Reality. In dealing with the problem of evil this form of idealism has an undeniable advantage over the rival theory. The monistic idealist, however unwilling he may be to recognize it, does really vacate the concept

of evil, both physical and moral, of its meaning. There cannot be anything essentially evil in a world which is the working out of an absolute thought or will. All evil is relative and partial; it is transcended, and becomes, in the final issue, a means to good. The significance of moral distinctions is much more definitely maintained by the pluralist. The unreasoning optimism which hands over all the oppositions and difficulties of life to the Absolute, serenely confident that it will come out right in the end—a comfortable faith which so easily degenerates into cowardice and negligence—finds no favor with the pluralist. To him, the world is the scene of a real struggle, the results of which are not predetermined. Things will come right if they are made to come right, but not otherwise. It may be that "somehow good will be the final goal of ill," but, if so, this will be a consummation accomplished in the sphere of time and history, and not in a supratemporal realm.

From the point of view of ethics and practical life, the pluralistic metaphysic is to be preferred. The question which may occur to the dispassionate inquirer, is, of course, whether in each of these contrasted systems we have not a disproportionate emphasis upon truths neglected by the opposing doctrine, whether monistic and pluralistic idealism may not be combined in such a way as to take the truth, and reject the error, of each, and in this way a world view be attained which will represent a higher synthesis than either.

James Ward, using a political analogy, asks under what kind of constitution we may best conceive the world of living and acting things to be administered—in case we have a realm of ends: "is it," he suggests, "a more or less orderly democracy, is it a limited monarchy, or is it possibly an absolute one?"¹¹ Absolutism is, of course, the absolute monarchy; pluralism is the democracy; what is the philosophical counterpart of that intermediate form of civil order, which the instinct of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, at once liberty-loving

¹¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 22.

and law-abiding, has preferred? Whatever terms of technical description we may employ, the theory which mediates between the absolutist and the pluralist will coincide, in its essential features, with Theism. Our inquirer may thus be led to decide that the theistic theory, which certainly best serves the purposes of religion, best serves also the purposes of philosophy.

It may be that the conclusions with which our supposititious friend has been credited will seem somewhat commonplace. We have imagined him to emerge from his philosophical investigations with these results. He is a realist, but not a new realist. He recognizes the value and the necessity of the pragmatic method, but he restricts it within narrower limits than those frequently claimed for it. He pays homage to the great masters of monistic idealism, and at the same time responds sympathetically to the pluralistic protest. Not in weak compromise, but, as it seems to him, in constructive synthesis, he combines these two world-interpretations in one which has points of accord with, and points of dissent from, each.

These conclusions may be commonplace, but it is pertinent to ask whether they are not the conclusions which commend themselves to the great majority of plain, common-sense people, who, after all, render the final verdict of the world in matters of speculation as well as in the various spheres of practical life.

IMAGES AND IDEAS

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Seven years ago I began to tell my students that the conventional doctrine of "mental images" is, in my estimation, largely fiction, and to direct their attention to a simpler and more empirical analysis of the process and content in imagination. Two years ago I published a brief text-book in which I expressed this radical view:¹ but as the reception by other psychologists of its earlier informal expressions had not been highly encouraging, I put it in print with the least disturbance of terminology consistent with honesty; retaining the term 'image,' but defining it to mean not a specific sort of content, but rather any content of which one is conscious in the specific way which is commonly called 'thinking' as opposed to 'perceiving,' and pointing out that those who could not give up the official theory might continue to use the term in the old way. This procedure enabled me to discuss perception, memory and kindred topics so that the statements made were true, whether the reader accepted my view or adhered to the older one: a result which, at that time, it was desirable to obtain.

It is now time to make a full break with the conventional theory of imagery, and to state the empirical doctrine above mentioned in the most positive and unequivocal way possible. This course is rendered advisable by the fact that some of the critical readers of my text-book were puzzled by what appeared to them vacillation in the treatment of imagination,² and is rendered imperative by the recent developments in what is called 'behaviorism,' in which the rejection of ima-

¹ *A System of Psychology*, Scribners, 1912, pp. 16, 153-168.

² *E. g.*, Langfeld, H. S., *Psych. Bull.*, 1913, x, 35-36.

gery is coupled with an extreme development of empirical thought-analysis which makes my system seem now quite conservative.³ I am obliged to protest against the behaviorist doctrine of thought since I feel that the more conservative innovation may suffer from the opposition which will be called out by the extreme doctrine.

We must distinguish more carefully than has heretofore been customary between 'consciousness' and 'content.' 'Consciousness' is *awareness* of anything whatever, and 'content' is the anything of which one is conscious or aware. The distinction is perfectly clear but heretofore psychology has avoided it. "Sensation," for example, has been used convertibly for both an elementary quality of content and for the awareness of that quality. So with the other "elementary forms of consciousness"—affective and conative factors: one is rarely certain whether an author means actually consciousness, or content, when he refers to them.

This distinction between consciousness and content must be kept in mind throughout this discussion, or else much of it will be misunderstood. The term sensation, in particular, is always to be taken as indicating a perceived (or perceptible) factor, and never the perceiving thereof. When I speak of 'muscular sensation' I mean the peculiar aspect of the actual muscle-contraction which is perceived by the owner of the muscle, and by him alone. The contraction has visible aspects, and tangible aspects, which may be perceived by several people: in addition it has this 'kinaesthetic' aspect which can be perceived by one person only.

An image, as understood in current psychology, is a form of sensory content, though not exactly a sensation. Just how it is supposed to differ from a sensation is not at the present moment an important consideration, since there is a variety of opinion on the point.⁴ The fundamental likeness

³ Watson, John B., "Image and Affection in Behavior," *Jour. Philos.* etc., 1913, x, 422-424.

⁴ Ziehen, *Leitfaden der physiologischen Physiologie*, 9te, Aufl.,

of image to sensation consists in the image having the modality of the sensation from which it is derived. Some images, accordingly, are visual, some are auditory, some are gustatory, and so on. This modality of images is usually understood as being the fact that the images, in themselves, differ qualitatively in the same way in which sensations differ. For example, the fundamental difference between visual images and auditory images is of the same order as the difference between visual and auditory sensation. An 'idea' is commonly defined as 'an image with its meaning.' I may, it is supposed, have an 'image' of a dark brown rectangle with a gold design on it; but that image has no more value in thought than the stars I see when I bump my head against the steampipe in the basement, unless I have also the consciousness that the colored rectangle stands for, or refers to, a copy of Hobbes's Leviathan lying on my table, or some such object other than the image itself.

Of what use, we might ask, is the image? What is its function in the process of ideation? Since, in addition to being conscious of the image, I must also be conscious of the object to which it refers, should I not get on just as well if I were conscious of the object alone? Or rather, should I not get along better, since I should then have but one thing to deal with instead of two? From the point of view of the conventional doctrine of images, the only possible answer is that as a matter of fact the image does appear when one thinks of the object, and therefore that it must have some function. It seems fair to assume that the doctrine of images would never have been developed in its elaborate form, nor have been so tenaciously held, if there were not actually some present content inseparably associated with the thought of an absent object. What may be this factor at the basis of the conventional image theory,

146 ff.; Titchener, *Text-book of Psychology*, Pt. 1, 197-199; Angell, *Psychology*, 4th Ed., 152; Stout, *Groundwork of Psychology*, 2d Ed., 106-109.

it is our business to find out. It is also probable that the doctrine of images is acceptable because it aids us to minimize the consideration of a remarkable and puzzling peculiarity of consciousness: the fact, namely, that we can be conscious of what is not present either in space or in time. I can be conscious of objects which are so far removed that they can exert no appreciable influence on my body, or which even no longer exist. Not only, I repeat, may the past influences of such an object on my body in certain cases influence my present behavior,—a fact which may be given a purely physiological explanation; but the object can be in or before my consciousness; that is to say, I think of it,—a fact of which psychology alone can take scientific cognizance.

Psychology, however, has shrunk from the acknowledgment of this transcendent power of consciousness and has turned her attention almost exclusively to the forms of experience which are seemingly more commonplace, namely, the experience of the present or immediate contents of the thought. It has, therefore, made much of the image and has ascribed to it certain characteristics which belong really not to the image, but to the ultimate object of thought.

I contend that the image, as a copy or reproduction of sensation of variable mode does not exist. There is indeed a present content essentially connected with imagination or thought; but this present content is in each case a muscle sensation, or a complex of muscle sensations. We are, therefore, in investigating images, dealing not with copies, or pale ghosts, of former sensations but with actual present sensations.

The image, defined as a mere shadow of an auditory object, a visual object, or an object of some other mode of sense, has no discoverable explanatory function, even if the existence of such an image be admitted. But the muscle sensation renders an explanatory service which is badly needed in psychology. In order to demonstrate this, let us turn to the essential condition of consciousness; the arc-reflex.

The unit of psycho-physiological activity is a *reflex*, through an *arc* which starts from a sensory neuron terminal, or *receptor*,⁵ passes across two or more synapses, and terminates in a modification of the activity of one of the *effectors*, of which there are three classes, (a) striped muscle, (b) smooth and cardiac muscle, and (d) glands. No consciousness occurs without a complete arc-reflex, although certain reflexes apparently produce no consciousness. The difference between the psycho-physiological and the purely physiological reflexes⁶ is an important subject for investigation, but not urgent for the present discussion, in which we are assuming nothing concerning the reflexes which can conceivably be altered by any findings with regard to the difference mentioned.

In actual life there are no simple arcs. Currents sent in over different afferent routes are collected in the centers and redistributed over many efferent routes. It is nevertheless legitimate to describe the neuro-muscular functions analytically in terms of simple or unitary arcs and reflexes.

Having regard to the termini of the arcs, we can distinguish three kinds of reflex: striped-muscular, smooth-muscular, and glandular. Having regard to both starting places and termini, we shall find it important to distinguish between the arcs which connect similar structures, and which accordingly may be called *homeodetic*, and those which

⁵ The 'receptors' are: the rod-cells and cone-cells of the retina; the hair-cells of the internal ear; the gustatory cells of the taste-buds; the olfactory cells; the various corpuscles and bulbs in which sensory nerve fibres terminate in the skin, mucous membrane, and connective tissue: the 'free' endings of sensory fibers in various tissues; and the *muscle-spindles* which lie in the voluntary (striped) muscles and are the specific receptors for the 'muscle sense.' There are apparently no sensory endings in glands, and it is questionable whether the afferent terminals in connection with smooth muscle are *normally* sensory; i. e., whether normally than can initiate *conscious* reflexes.

⁶ By 'purely physiological' reflexes I mean those reflexes which do not directly produce, or condition, consciousness.

connect dissimilar structures, and which may accordingly be called *heterodetic*. We have at present no reason to assume that smooth-muscular and glandular reflexes may not be psychological: but we are certain that the striped-muscular reflexes have a large share in conditioning consciousness, and, as I shall attempt to show, that they are the essential mechanisms for associative thinking; hence we may for the time being neglect the first mentioned classes, concerning which, as a matter of fact, we possess little information.⁷

Heterodetic arcs may terminate in any of the three classes of effectors; homeodetic arcs are perhaps of the muscular types only, since there have been no afferent terminals discovered in glands. The peculiarity of the homeodetic arc is that the effect of one reflex initiates another; a heterodetic muscular reflex may therefore be followed by a sequence of homeodetic reflexes—a sequence which will be brought to an end by another heterodetic reflex, from muscle to gland; or

⁷ The smooth muscles and the glands undoubtedly have important psycho-physiological function, but the details can not at present be determined. It is possible that the experiences of desire and aversion are conditioned by reflexes from certain of the smooth muscles; hunger from the muscular coat of the stomach, sexual desire from the involuntary muscles of the genital organs, all other forms of desire being possibly reducible to these basic appetites and thirst—at whose reflex conditions we can guess with less plausibility. Other affective experiences may also be conditioned by reflexes from smooth muscular systems, and from cardiac muscle. The muscular coats of the blood vessels, for example, have long been suspected of participation in the production of pleasure and pain. The arrectores pilorum in the skin may have a specific affective function. We are not at present able to declare that the *terminus ad quem* of the arc is without importance, and we must therefore admit the possibility that the reflexes to smooth muscle and to glands may have effects on consciousness which are characteristic regardless of the *terminus a quo*. The morphology of glandular and smooth muscular arcs must be more fully known before speculation concerning the corresponding reflexes can be useful.

by 'drainage' into another arc system; or possibly by a positive inhibition reflex.

Restricting our attention once more to the cognitive or striped muscle arcs, it becomes at once apparent that the heterodetic striped-muscle arc conditions perception and the homeodetic arc conditions thought. This deduction from the hypothesis of reflex arcs provides at once two things of which psychology has long been in want; a physiological explanation of the association of ideas, and an explanation of the nature of so-called 'mental images.' The way in which a given series of homeodetic reflexes, once established, may become a habit, thus conditioning an associative train of thought, is so obvious that we need spend no time at present in amplifying this detail. The manner in which such a series becomes established requires some further explanation. Let $A' - a$, $B' - b$, and $C' - c$ ⁸ represent heterodetic muscular arcs (that is, perceptual arcs) which have become habitual. If on certain occasions we have reflexes through these in succession, we may have the afferent current from a' collected by central neurons and combined with the current from A' into the discharge to b ; similarly, the current from b' collected and combined with the discharge to c , and so on. As a result of this process, especially if the serial stimulation of A' , B' , and C' is repeated a number of times, we have the homeodetic arcs $a' - b$, $b' - c$, and so on, established as paths of habitual reflexes. In other words: the sets of muscular contractions habitually associated with A' , B' , C' and so on, have become associated into a series.

Going back now one step farther; the reflex, although represented above as occurring in a simple arc from A' to a , is really a complicated reflex built up in a manner similar to that in which the homeodetic reflex $a' - a$ is established. That which was originally a simple discharge from A' ,⁹ has, in the course of many repetitions, been combined with dis-

⁸ See Fig. 1.

⁹ See Fig. 2.

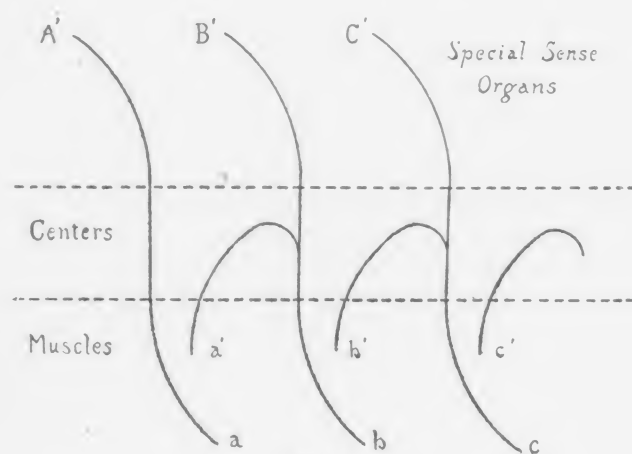


Fig. 1.

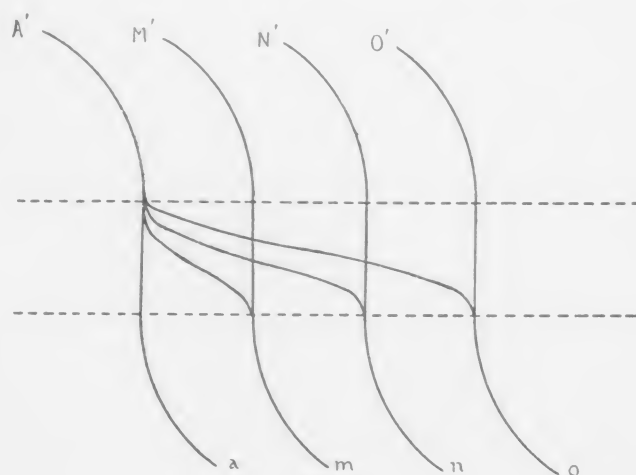


Fig. 2.

charges in many other arcs, $M' - m$, $N' - n$, $O' - o$, etc., and thus not only may homeodetic arcs between a and m' , n' , o' , etc., have been established, but also central connections between $A' - a$, $M' - m$, $N' - n$, $O' - o$, etc., have been formed. As a consequence of this central fusion a condition has been established such that a current from A' alone will be distributed, not to a alone, but also to m , n , o , etc. That is to say, stimulation of A alone will produce somewhat, though not exactly, the same results which would earlier have been produced by the stimulation of A' , M' , N' , O' , etc.

At this point our analysis compels us to plunge into the epistemological whirlpool, but by holding fast to our arc-reflex hypothesis we can come safely through. The heterodetic arc $A' - a$, in its simplest or original form, conditions the consciousness of A , the sense quality corresponding to the stimulation A' . In the case of retinal stimulation, A' is the process in the cone-cell, and A is the color actually 'seen.' A is properly called the sensation in one of the several meanings of that term; namely, that which we are conscious of or perceive through the mediation of a sense organ. M , N , O , etc., therefore, are other sense qualities, or sensations, the consciousness of which is conditioned by the arcs $M' - m$, $N' - n$, $O' - o$, etc. The final, more complex, reflex from A' to a and also to m , n , o , etc., conditions therefore the perception of A , together with its associates, M , N , O , etc. In concrete illustrative terms: the visual presentation of an apple no longer arouses visual perception merely, but arouses also the perception of the gustatory, olfactory, tactual, and possibly the thermal qualities of the apple.

It might be urged that in considering the arc-reflex as the condition of consciousness we have put the emphasis in an almost exclusive way on the efferent side; that it seems to make no difference where the reflex originates, so long as its terminations are of a certain sort. This is not an accurate deduction. The consciousness conditioned by the reflex

from A' to a, m, n, o , etc., is not the same as that conditioned by the simultaneous reflexes $A' - a, M' - m, N' - n, O' - o$, etc. In concrete terms: the perception of the apple presented to the eye alone is not the same as the perception of the apple which is sensibly seen, tasted, smelled and felt at once or in quick succession. Perception, in other words, is not mere multiple sensory intuition, and we shall show later that it is not, on the other hand, mere sensory intuition *plus* imagination, even in an analytical interpretation.

Passing on to the topic of present chief interest: what is the content of thought? Again we have a deduction from our fundamental hypothesis which is amply verified by observation. There are two contents for every state of thought-consciousness. First, the muscular contraction which is responsible for the initiation of the homeodetic reflex—not the muscular contraction considered as a concrete whole, but that aspect of it which we call the *muscle sensation*. The contraction as a whole is visible and tangible, as well as sensible though the mediation of the muscle spindle. When we speak of contraction we intend the total of the properties of the process, or at least several of them, just as when we speak of an apple we mean the total, or several, properties of the object. The perception of the contraction as a complex fact may be conditioned by a reflex from the muscle over an arc built up in the way described for the complex visual arc above. The direct or immediate content of the homeodetic arc consciousness is, however, the muscle sensation (or sensation complex). This sensation is the true *image*. Secondly, the consciousness conditioned by the homeodetic arc-reflex may have for its ultimate or derivative object the object of the perceptual consciousness conditioned by the heterodetic arc which originally terminated in the muscular contractions initiating the homeodetic arc in question. Another way of putting it is to say that each perceptual reflex ends in a muscular contraction which causes a thought-reflex, and that the object of the perception and the indirect object of the thought are the same.

The sidelights which further deductions throw on the whole process of consciousness are of high luminosities, and I believe that what they show is fully justified by observation. Upon only one of these points need I touch in the present paper: and I discuss it only to overcome what may seem an important objection to the hypothesis as developed up to this point. The thought-consciousness is not uniformly of both the direct object and the indirect object, but is variable; sometimes it is predominantly of the direct content, sometimes of the indirect content. This variability of *attention* as we usually designate it, is without doubt due to variations in the relations of the particular arc or group of arcs in question to the totality of other arcs occurring at the same time, or in more accurate language, to the other parts of the total arc-system. This conception of the dependence of what Münsterberg has called *vividness*, and Titchener has later called *sensory clearness*, on the interrelations of arcs is not new. It has been made familiar through the work of W. McDougall in particular. This factor of interrelations also determines the formation of particular arcs, and determines which of several branches of an arc a particular reflex shall follow.

Returning now to our chief topic, we find that attention to the direct content of thought reveals muscle sensations and only muscle sensations. The derivative content is the *idea*, and is in itself not different from a content of perceptual consciousness. The idea is of course a variable thing, just as the object of perception is variable; now this aspect being before consciousness, now that aspect. The chief difference between ideal and perceptual content is that the idea is much more variable than the percept; and this is because the system of muscular contractions is exceedingly complex, and ever recurs in constantly varying forms. An illustration of the extreme complexity of the image-contractions is found in language: a word as perceived kinaesthetically is the sole direct content which occurs in many cases of thought, and

for the production of a single word a great number of muscular activities are required.

It is of course exceedingly difficult to separate completely in introspection the direct content from the idea. The difficulty is especially great if we do not understand what the direct content really is. Hence we need not be puzzled by the fact that the direct content has been described in conventional psychology as possessing the modality, and possibly other characteristics, of the idea. For example, in many cases the so-called image is classed as visual merely because the idea it controls is an idea which is primarily visual, or of which the visual features have been chiefly attended to. Under the influence of this tendency alone, persons would be distributed in types strictly in accordance with their habits of attention. But there is probably another factor which enters to make the determining of types difficult and variable. The images are operations of a great variety of bodily muscles. The muscles of the face, eye-balls and vocal organs participate in imagery to a very important degree; the muscles of the arms and upper part of the trunk have less to do, and the image-functions of the legs are perhaps still less important. The sexual organs sustain a certain amount of imaginative activity which, when it occurs, is very definite. The muscles of the organs of the special senses are in many cases concerned in "imagery," and there is a strong tendency in these cases to refer the image to the mode of the special sense concerned. If the muscles of the eye are involved in the production of an image, there is a tendency to classify the "image" as visual, and so on. Unquestionably, the use of the vocal organs becomes more pronounced as we advance in age and education, and the "images" which would be naïvely classed as visual and auditory become less consequential. Olfactory "images" ought at all times to be infrequent, since the muscles involved in the act of smelling are not specialized to that function.

Some of the corollaries of the theory of muscular thought-

content are highly important. There is no such thing as "imageless" thought, though it is easy to see how one might find no "images" when looking specifically for the ghosts of visual or auditory sensations. Probably the ferocious *Bewusstseinslagen* and other monsters discovered by the Germans may be discovered to be nothing but general muscular habits, when the light is turned on them.

The doctrine of the subconscious also receives a new interpretation. In many cases the muscular contractions themselves escape consciousness. Perhaps this is the general rule when we are thinking. Doubtless the series of contractions can go on at times without arousing thought at all. In that case, the final arcs of the series may rouse consciousness and bring before it the result of unconscious reasoning or reflection. This seems to be a much more intelligible scheme than that of unconscious cerebration.

The discussion of ideo-motor action must come to a stop for want of a topic. The apparent sequence of action upon thought is in part due to the muscular activity involved in the reflex which conditions the thought, and in part to the mechanical sequence of the homeodetic arc-reflexes. In many cases, that is to say, the activity which is supposed to be the result of a thought is merely a part of the conditioning process; in other cases the reflex which conditions the thought is followed by another reflex terminating in an appropriate action, the two arcs having been associatively connected in the way described above.

The foregoing discussion is perhaps too brief to be clear, and has not the argument and the exposition sharply distinguished. It will therefore help to prevent misunderstanding if I add a still briefer but more explicit recapitulation of the points involved.

1. We must distinguish sharply between *consciousness* and *content*; meaning by content *anything which can be known directly*, and by consciousness the direct *knowing* or *being aware* of any content. This distinction is important because

many of the statements made above involving these terms are not significant if 'consciousness' be taken to mean something else (*e. g.*, taken to include both awareness and content).

2. We must admit the fact that consciousness has a certain time- and space-transcending character. The consciousness which exists (or occurs) at the present moment and here (in so far as consciousness can be dated and placed), may have as *content* something which is neither existent in the present moment, nor spatially included in nor contiguous to the organism to which the consciousness 'belongs.'

3. 'Mental image' psychology attempts to account for the fact that we apprehend non-present contents by assuming a peculiar sort or form of content which is present, and acts as intermediary in such apprehension. But, since these 'mental images' can function in thought only in so far as they 'mean' or 'refer to' (literally, carry consciousness over to) the 'absent' content, this psychology virtually admits the time- and space-transcending nature of consciousness.

4. The 'mental image' theory is logically a failure, since it does not accomplish the specific purpose for which it apparently has been needed. As a thought-mechanism, the 'mental-image' is superfluous, because consciousness must, even if it apprehends a 'mental image,' apprehend nevertheless the object to which the 'mental image' refers. The doctrine of 'mental images' does not in the least explain how consciousness can be of an absent object.

5. Upon analysis of his thought-content, and the content of the consciousness concomitant with thought, the writer is unable to find any 'mental images.' This negative finding does not *prove* that there are no such images, even in the writer's content; but taken in connection with the superfluity of the 'mental image' (as set forth in the preceding paragraph), it makes it unreasonable to assume any such content-factor. In order to justify the assumption of 'mental imagery' it would be necessary to show either (1)

that such factors are actually discoverable, or else (2) that the assumption is of assistance in explaining some phenomenon whose occurrence is admitted.

6. Other observers do report 'mental images.' I find introspectively that *in many cases* I am conscious of certain present content-items while thinking, namely muscular contractions, which seem regularly concomitant to the thought processes with which they occur. This discovery leads me to form the working hypothesis that muscular activity is involved in the conditions of all thought, and the further and supplementary hypothesis that this form of present content (muscular activity) is that which is actually observed by those who report 'mental images.' These observers correctly notice that there is a present content in addition to the 'absent' or ultimate object of thought, but they mistakenly confuse the quality of the ultimate object with the quality of the present content.

7. The hypothesis of uniform muscular conditions for the thought processes must be tested, not only by appeal to data of observation, but also by determining its congruity, or incongruity, with other hypotheses, psychological and physiological, which are accepted unconditionally or provisionally.

8. The most important hypothesis to be considered in the connection just mentioned is the modern reflex-arc hypothesis. This hypothesis involves the proposition that all consciousness-processes end in activity of effectors (muscles and glands). When we attempt to apply this hypothesis to the specific case of association between successive awarenesses (or states of consciousness), we find the only scheme possible includes as essential that which we have tentatively assumed, namely, muscle activity as the initiation of the thought process. We find also, that the particular muscle activity involved as the condition of the *thought* of a certain object is also involved in the process conditioning the perception of the same object.

9. So far as we are able to go, therefore, we find nothing

but confirmation of our working hypothesis, namely, that there is no present content in (or accompanying) thought, except muscular activity, which, as perceived through the so-called "muscle-sense," is designated as "muscular sensation." Let it be understood that this hypothesis makes no attempt to explain *how* physiological activity makes thought or any other form of consciousness possible. It accepts the fact that thought occurs and the fact that its occurrence is conditioned by physiological activity, and is directed simply towards the empirical analysis of this condition.

The scheme outlined above has certain agreements with behaviorism, but also differs sharply from the latter hypothesis. Behaviorism insists that behavior (muscular and glandular) is to be studied for its own sake, and that its connection with any possible consciousness is strictly to be ignored. I, on the other hand, am interested in organic behavior only in so far as it may legitimately be inferred to be a condition, or a part of the condition or conditions, of consciousness (in the sense which I have defined). Specifically: behaviorism insists that muscular activity is that which has usually been called *thought*. I insist that for psychology thought is thought, and the muscular activity is its essential condition. Methodologically, again, there is an important difference between my position and behaviorism. The latter theory practically restricts the means of psychological observation to the special senses, and principally to vision. Behavior is studied chiefly in so far as it is seen, or its graphic registration seen, though the audible and tangible aspects are included in the study to a lesser extent, and the olfactory and gustatory aspects might be. The muscle-sense, however, is absolutely ruled out,—a discrimination which seems quite unjust to this sense. Behaviorism admits no introspection, and the observation of muscle sensations is of course introspection, in any current sense of that term. I am inclined to go to the other extreme, and to say that the most valuable observation of muscular activity is through the

muscle sense, and to add (although without direct bearing on the present discussion) that the direct observation of such feelings as pleasure, desire, etc., will always be psychologically of prime importance, however much we may find out about the physiology of smooth muscle and gland.

A final word about introspection is relevant, since I have above committed myself to a certain use of the term, although I have in earlier papers objected strongly to the conventional conception of introspection. Introspection, in so far as the term has any validity and usefulness in psychology, is the consciousness of muscular sensations and of the affective and conative factors which we usually class as 'feelings.' It is the observation of, or immediate attention to those objects which have an existence inside the body, and those others which have possibly no spatial location at all. Introspection, considered as a turning of the consciousness upon itself, if such a mental feat be possible, is something with which the psychologist has no concern. What has passed, in psychological work, for such mental gymnastics has been in the best instances just such introspection as I have described; and in other instances a confused observation of external objects.

Introspection, properly understood, may yet be of great value, perhaps of essential value, to psychology. I do not believe that the 'thought process' or the 'feeling process' can ever be adequately studied by visual means, or by indirect registration; that is, as mere 'behavior.' Immediate observation through the muscle-sense is necessary. At any rate, I hope to see introspection given a fair trial, and not condemned incontinently because of the barrenness of its misunderstood past.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF IDEAS

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The rumor has by this time perhaps begun to spread even beyond academic walls that many philosophers have of late been treating with strange harshness and contumely certain venerable entities which were once the objects of an almost universal piety. 'Consciousness,' for example, which formerly, more than any other philosophical conception, was invested with awe and majesty, now often presents the appearance of a King Lear of metaphysics. The most widely read and most thought-provoking of recent American philosophers raised, it is now ten years since, the startling question: "Does consciousness exist?" And though he did not answer it with an entirely unequivocal negative, he quite plainly proposed that from this once-ruling category should be taken most of the dignities and the powers which custom had hitherto assigned to it. Since then, it is well known, it has become the fashion with not a few philosophers to describe 'consciousness' as a 'merely external relation'; and there are in the philosophical vocabulary few more disrespectful epithets than this. The fate of 'consciousness' has been shared by several other ancient notions which once made up its retinue. The existence of sensations, of images, of ideas, of mental states, of 'subjective appearances,' and the possibility of 'introspection,' have been denied by recent philosophical and psychological iconoclasts.

In the following pages I shall attempt to analyze the meaning of certain of these new uprisings against old-established assumptions of philosophy, to determine their logical motives, and to examine into the validity of the arguments which have been offered in justification of them. The temper of

the inquiry, it may as well be acknowledged from the outset, will be a sceptical one. With the best will in the world to be, as the French say, *dans le mouvement*, I have not yet been able to see that the leaders of the insurrection have established their charges of usurpation against all of the older conceptions which they attack. The charges, however, are clearly important, if just; and they merit careful scrutiny. Much that is here to be said, by way of exposition and criticism of them, can make no pretension to novelty; some of it has been said before by the present writer. But it has seemed worth while to review the whole situation in a somewhat more connected and methodical fashion than hitherto, and to present in a manner which may perhaps be intelligible to the non-philosophical reader the various aspects of a discussion which has thus far been carried on, for the most part, through a multitude of controversial papers in the technical journals.

It will serve to clear the stage for the real issue if I concede at once that, in a certain sense of the term, the case against 'consciousness' has been made out. It is evidently believed by many people, and it has been and sometimes still is asserted by philosophers, that at those moments when we *are* conscious, consciousness itself is one of the things that we are immediately conscious of; that in being aware of objects we are also aware of consciousness as a process, as a kind of "impalpable inner flow." Our perceptual experience, in other words, is held to be of "an essentially dualistic constitution," and this duality is supposed to be directly given in the experience itself. People, as Professor James has said, declare: "We *feel* our thought, flowing as a life within us in absolute contrast with the objects which it so unremittingly escorts. We cannot be faithless to this immediate intuition. The dualism is a fundamental *datum*." The existence of *this* kind of 'consciousness' James in his later years flatly denied. "Experience," he maintained, "has no such inner duplicity"; and the separation of it into consciousness

and content comes not by way of analysis but by way of addition. What is present when we perceive is perceived content—along, of course, with feelings and conations which are not essentially different from perceived content; beyond this, introspection discloses no further given element. That it has been supposed to do so is due imperfect analysis, and to the assignment of a special and impressive name to the faultily analyzed part of the moment's content. "Let the case be what it may with others," said James, "I am as confident as I am of anything that, in myself, the stream of thinking (which I recognize emphatically as a phenomenon) is only a careless name for what, when scrutinized, reveals itself to consist chiefly of the stream of my breathing." "Breath, which was ever the original of 'spirit,' breath moving outwards between the glottis and the nostrils, is, I am persuaded, the essence out of which philosophers have constructed the entity known to them as consciousness."¹

From this denial of the inner duality of our experience as it is immediately given, I do not find reason for dissenting. A 'consciousness' clearly contrasted with 'content' is not, so far as I can see, a thing of which I am primarily and intuitively conscious when I perceive or think. The question is scarcely one for argument; each man can only report his own introspective findings upon the matter at issue. But my own reading of the facts, so far as James's main negation is concerned, agrees with his. If consciousness is after all to be recognized as a fact, and as a factor in the phenomenon called perception, it must be an inferred fact; its reality, and its distinction from whatever is regarded as its proper antithesis, must, if at all, be established through a reflective interpretation of the immediate data of perception, not read off as an actual part of those data. Our criticism of the theories which reject or belittle the notion of consciousness can not, therefore, be so short and easy as might

¹ *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, p. 37.

be offered by those who fancy that the whole matter may be at once settled by an appeal to the direct testimony of consciousness about itself.

Clearly, however, there is no legitimate inference from the fact that consciousness does not exist as an observable item amongst the objects of perception, to the conclusion that it does not exist at all; nor to the conclusion that objects may not be 'in' consciousness; nor yet to the conclusion that there are objects which exist outside of it and without dependence upon it. That a given object is, by any individual observer, sometimes perceived and sometimes not perceived, is at one moment thought of and at another moment not thought of,—this, at least, is a truth of every-day experience which no one, I suppose, denies. When I wake in the morning and begin to perceive the objects in my room, something, assuredly, has befallen those objects. And the familiar and convenient way of describing what has befallen them is to say that, while before I awoke they were not, they now are, 'in' my consciousness. But since consciousness is something which objects can truly be in, it evidently must be some sort of existent. It may be merely a relation or a context or a "unique and not further analyzable togetherness"; but whatever else it is, it is a somewhat in which certain content is at times present and from which it is at other times absent. The real issue, therefore, cannot be the question as to the existence of consciousness (in this broad sense); it must rather be the question as to its nature—the question what it is that really happens when an object comes to be perceived. Accordingly, even the most radical of those engaged in revising our conceptions upon these matters do not dispense with the notion of consciousness, in the sense just indicated, though they occasionally manifest a somewhat superstitious aversion from the use of the term. They know as well as any one that the necessary starting-point of all reasoning on this subject is the fact that there exist distinct complexes or systems called individual consciousnesses, into

which objects pass and from which they lapse. The problem of the new theorists is merely that of describing what is given in, and what is implied by, this transaction.

The chief contention of these theorists may be said to offer, primarily, an answer to a particular question which forms a part of this general problem—the question: *What is it* that is ‘in consciousness,’ at any moment when a given object is actually perceived by someone? And their answer, in plain terms—an expression it should be remarked, which usually means seemingly clear, but really obscure, terms—is that it is always actual things, and never thoughts, ideas, images, or sensations of things, that enter into consciousness and make up its so-called ‘content.’ What this distinction between ‘things’ and ‘thoughts’ signifies, it will be necessary to inquire more fully later; for the present it may suffice to say that the answer given implies that there exists no unique class of entities called ‘thoughts’ or ‘images,’ generically distinct from things, having a purely ‘mental’ character, and constituting the immediate data of consciousness. But this account of the character of the content of consciousness evidently implies, also, a certain negative answer to the question concerning the nature of that which this content is ‘in,’—in other words, concerning the nature of consciousness itself. It implies, namely, that consciousness is the sort of thing which is incapable of having any special kind of content of its own; that—to put it paradoxically—almost everything may be said, at one time or another, to be ‘in the mind,’ except ideas.

It is, then, the existence of a supposed species of entities called ‘images’ or ‘ideas’ or ‘mental representations’ or ‘subjective content,’ not the existence of consciousness as such, that the new theories deny. What we are witnessing is a rebellion against an assumption which, in spite of some struggles against it on the part of the Scotch school, has long been dominant in philosophy, and has much colored both the thought and the terminology of the man of science, and even

of the plain man, especially since the seventeenth century. Indeed, the new movement may be said to be a demand for a rejection of a certain belief which seventeenth-century philosophy had been supposed to have definitively established; while the general contention of the critics of the movement is simply that its partisans have failed to see the force of the reasons which long since led reflective men to that belief—have failed to profit duly by the past history of thought, and are in reality proposing a reversion to a primitive and uncritical way of thinking from which mankind seemed, nearly three hundred years ago—and, in part, many centuries earlier still—to have escaped. The whole controversy, therefore, is simply a harking back to an earlier juncture in philosophy, a reëxamination of an opinion which received its classic formulations at the hands of certain seventeenth-century writers.

The most familiar of these formulations is to be found in some sentences of John Locke’s. “It is evident,” he wrote, “that the mind knows not things immediately, but by the intervention of the ideas it has of them.” And again: “The mind, in all its thoughts and reasonings, hath no other immediate object but its own ideas, which it alone does or can contemplate.” This belief, that there are ‘ideas’ and that it is to them only that we have direct access, has been a decisive factor in a great part of the philosophy between Locke’s day and the end of the nineteenth century. It gave rise to the idealistic doctrines of the century following Locke’s—directly to those of Berkeley and Collier, by more indirect and complicated processes to that of Kant. And it brought it about that much subsequent realism was, like Locke’s own, of the dualistic sort—a realism which acknowledged the existence of two realms of being, things and thoughts, and supposed the latter to be somehow, and in some measure, counterparts or pictures of the former. To how recent a time the same assumption still ruled in philosophy may be judged from a remark in a book published in 1903 by an American

writer thoroughly at home in contemporary discussions: "The doctrine that material objects exist [primarily] as modifications of the mind . . . is all but universally accepted by philosophers. Few who deserve the name imagine that in perceiving material objects we have immediately to do with anything but our own mental states." Ten years have singularly changed all that; and such a remark if made now by any philosopher would assuredly be very ill received by large numbers of his professional brethren. The change, indeed, became conspicuous in the next year after that in which Professor Strong expressed himself in the manner I have quoted; it was in 1904 that several American philosophers well deserving the name—James, Perry, Woodbridge—began preaching the crusade against the prevalent conception of consciousness. In this crusade several otherwise distinct philosophical groups are by this time heartily united. Not only the so-called 'new realists' in America, and several other American philosophers of distinction who do not so label themselves, but also the most interesting recent school of English realism—that best represented by Professor S. Alexander of Manchester—have joined forces in this "revolt against the tyranny of images," as Alexander has called it. There is, indeed, for this last-mentioned writer, a class of existents which may properly be called mental or subjective; but it includes only conations and feelings. They and they alone are "the stuff of which mind is made." But what are called representations are not mental states but physical things. "We may," Alexander concedes, "call physical objects ideas in order to indicate that they are related to the mind so far as we know them. But let us not substitute fiction for facts by supposing that a physical object, because it is related to a mental process, gives rise to an idea of itself which is not physical but mental."² As another English writer, Mr. Percy Nunn, has put the doctrine, emphasizing

² *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, IX, 1908-9, p. 2.

the positive and realistic obverse of the denial of the existence of ideas: "sensational experience of whatever sort carries with it the guarantee of the extra-mentality of its object." This, it should be understood, is to be taken literally; it is the extra-mentality, not of things corresponding to the content, but of the content itself, that is affirmed.

The American and English innovating doctrines thus far mentioned have all been associated with, and instrumental to, that revival of realism which has been so conspicuous a tendency in recent Anglo-American philosophy. It is worth mentioning that—however paradoxical the fact may seem—a similar denial of the 'subjective' or 'mental' character of the content of (at least) normal perception made its appearance much earlier in German philosophy as one of the many forms in which neo-Kantian idealism has worked itself out. The *immanente Philosophie* which Wilhelm Schuppe, Professor at Greifswald, has for more than thirty years been expounding and elaborating, has been sometimes described by its author as "a corroboration of naïve realism," at least in so far as naïve realism repudiates the Lockian duality of mental representations and objective realities. Idealistic the "philosophy of immanence" is, in the sense that it asserts that the only reality of which we can have any knowledge or form any conception involves the relation of an object to a subject, of things to an Ego. To be, or at all events to be knowable, is to be 'for' a self. But this, Schuppe insists, in no wise implies that the contents of sensation and perception are mental, are 'in' my individual consciousness or dependent upon it. Though object and subject must always be co-present in a bi-polar relation, the former is no more in the latter than the latter is in the former; on the contrary, the doctrine of their necessary conjunction, their *notwendige Zusammengehörigkeit*, especially emphasizes their distinctness from one another and their reciprocal externality. And if it be urged that all the contents of the complex constituted by the correlation of these two terms must still be admitted

by Schuppe to be 'in consciousness,' if one means by consciousness precisely this complex itself, he replies that this is true only of *Bewusstsein überhaupt*, not of individual consciousnesses. For the self 'to' which anything that is said to be must be 'given,' is not an individual self, but is merely, as it were, a common point of reference for all content. What is commonly called my private self is not a separate center of this sort, but is merely a series of particular, limited masses of content, in which my body has an especially constant and important place. My sensations and perceptions consist, therefore, merely of certain of the things in space which constitute the objective end of the universal subject-object relation; they do not consist of intra-mental images (*innerseelische Gebilde*) of those things. When an object comes to be perceived by me it undergoes, says Schuppe, no "duplication," and does not need "to be volatilized into an idea." And when it ceases to be perceived it does not lapse into nonentity; for "its existence is palpably independent of every individual percipient Ego."³

The occurrence of the same reaction against the belief in subjective sensations and ideas, which we have noted in the new realistic movements, in a school of Kantian antecedents and of idealistic affiliations, is striking evidence of the existence of some powerful natural impulsion in contemporary thought towards the conclusion here under discussion. And the adherents of the idealistic form of the "relational theory of consciousness," like the protagonists of the realistic version of it, are wont to speak with the utmost enthusiasm of the magnitude and the beneficence of the reforms which their new way of thinking is to introduce into philosophy. Thus a writer in the first volume of an important "Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences" now in process of publication, treating of "the transformation of the concept of

³ Schuppe, *Grundriss der Erkenntnistheorie und Logik*, 1910, pp. 16-35 *passim*.

consciousness in modern epistemology," declares that the view expressed by Schuppe, and after him by others, "seems likely to lead philosophy along entirely new paths A philosophy which starts from this conception is much more supple; innumerable new possibilities open before it. In proof of this we may point out that it has already, with a single blow, freed itself both from solipsism and from the necessity of denying the existence of matter or of violently transmuting it into a complex of psychical processes." The new interpretation of what 'being-in-consciousness' means is at last showing philosophy a way of escape from "the cul-de-sac of psychological idealism," yet without leading it into a mechanistic materialism.⁴

It is obvious that there are three possible types of view with respect to the existence of ideas—to continue to use the word, for brevity's sake, in Locke's wide and loose sense. It may, namely, be held:

1. That all the immediate content of perception is mental, and consists of ideas; or
2. That some of it is mental and some physical, *i. e.*, that some contents are ideas and some are things; or
3. That there are no ideas, and that all perceptual content is objective and physical.

The second view is that taken by Schuppe. It is only the things which can be fitted into a single spatial system and can be verified by more than one percipient, that are held by him to be external to and independent of individual consciousness. In other words, what is called non-veridical content is composed of ideas; it "depends upon the physical or psychical peculiarities of the individual and must be regarded as a subjective modification." The same way of dealing with illusory appearances has been adopted by at least one recent

⁴ Losskij in *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, I, pp. 243, 242.

English realist, Mr. A. Wolf. The doctrine of the literal identity of perceived content and real object—which he calls “real presentationism”—he regards as a wholly satisfactory theory of normal perception; but of imagination and memory and perceptual error he thinks that an entirely different account must be given. “In normal perception the mental process is transparent, while the content consists of the presented physical object; in imagination both process and content are mental, though the content is also representative of something physical (actual or supposed).”⁵ I do not mean to inquire here whether this second of the three possible views is or is not a weak and untenable compromise between the two more extreme doctrines. I mention it only for the purpose of distinguishing it expressly from the view with which in this paper I shall hereafter exclusively be concerned—the view that no such things as sensations or ideas, as non-physical entities, exist at all.

In order to render unmistakable the meaning of this doctrine, I now proceed, even at the risk of some iteration, to make explicit its implications with respect to the several distinct classes of perceptual content of which we have experience.

(a) The simplest case is, of course, that in which its implications and those of the second view are identical—namely, veridical perception. Let it be supposed, as the realist supposes, that there exists a material object independent of consciousness, occupying, at a given moment, a definite space, having definite magnitude and a distinctive set of physical qualities; then, according to the theory in question, what ‘enters consciousness’ is just this actual, simultaneously existing object—not a substitute for it. In other words, the theory in this case amounts to an affirmation of ‘epistemological monism’ and a rejection of the Lockian sort of dualism. In order to be ‘in consciousness’ the object does not

⁵ *Proc. Ar. Soc.*, IX, 1908-9, p. 163.

need to undergo translation or sublimation into some more impalpable mental equivalent. Not all of the object, it is true, nor all of its attributes, enter consciousness at any one time. Consciousness is admittedly selective; it takes in only a part of the world of real objects. But what it takes in, it takes in directly. Such is the account of true perception given by the new theory. And since this account agrees with what common sense has always, in spite of Mr. Locke and all the philosophers, been much inclined to believe about the matter in question, the theory is likely to strike the plain man as more distinguished, so far, by its plausibility than by its novelty. It may be new to latter-day philosophy, but it is scarcely new to the human mind. At the moment of actual perception even the dualistic philosopher doubtless finds some difficulty in always thinking that he has before him, not objects, but only doubles of objects.

If all our perceptions were veridical, the supposition that there exist ideas or mental percepts of objects, in addition to the objects themselves, might, at first thought, very naturally be deemed superfluous. The existence of the objects being assumed and the content that is in consciousness being found to have in all particulars the qualities of those objects, the natural inference might appear to be that the content consists of the objects. To assert a duality of existence where there is a complete identity of attributes would seem to violate the rule against multiplying entities beyond necessity. There is, however, one familiar consideration which, even if we had no reason to doubt that we always perceive things exactly as they are, would yet establish a presumption against the numerical identity of the assumed physical object with the content of consciousness. This is the fact that our perceptions are known to be mediated through, and conditioned by, extremely complicated physical processes, both without and within our bodies. In distance-perception, such as vision, for example, the object, and the nervous system upon the functioning of which the occurrence of a perception

of that object absolutely depends, occupy different positions in space; and the object can, so to say, report 'present' to consciousness only through a long series of intermediaries. Before I can see the blue in the picture upon yonder wall, the color—or rather, *not* the color itself, but the motions of the molecules or electrons of which the picture is composed—must produce an undulation in the ether; this undulation, which itself is not blue, must traverse the space intervening between the picture and my eye, must impinge upon the cornea, pass through it and the lens, get inverted, reach the retina in the form of a series of impulses, produce there complex chemical and electrical changes which generate processes in the optic nerve that pass on to the optical centres in the cortex and, without interruption, continue out again as efferent currents. There would seem to be little antecedent probability that we get even the same *kind* of fact—*e. g.*, the same color—at the end of all these maneuvers as lay at the *terminus a quo*. And it is clearly improbable that the 'percept of an object' which somehow emerges as an undeniable fact in the course of these happenings is one and the same existent as that from which the process began. Yet that from which the process began is certainly the supposed 'object' of perception.

The mere fact, then, that there is an intricate mechanism upon which perception depends constitutes an initial difficulty for epistemological monism—a difficulty which would remain even if errors of perception were assumed to be impossible. This difficulty has, of course, long been apparent to all the reflective part of mankind. Almost at the beginning of modern English philosophy and psychology we find Hobbes arguing that because, physiologically speaking, "sense is some internal motion in the sentient, generated by some internal motion of the parts of the object, and propagated through all the media to the innermost part of the organ," therefore what we immediately perceive can never be objects but only "phantasms" due to objects. "As in vision, so also in con-

ceptions that arise from other senses, the subject of their inherence is not in the object, but in the sentient."

Unfortunately, moreover, as is usually supposed, not all our perceptions reproduce merely, or reproduce faithfully, the characteristics of what are called the 'real objects' of the physical world. We must, then, pass on to enumerate those classes of perceptual content which have been usually regarded as not corresponding to 'objective reality,' and to note the implications of epistemological monism, or the denial of the existence of ideas, with respect to these types of content.

(b) It has been a commonplace of philosophy and psychology and physics since the seventeenth century that the sensible qualities which appear in consciousness are to be distinguished into two sorts, called 'primary' and 'secondary' qualities, and that the secondary must be held to be 'subjective' only, *i. e.*, neither to be nor to be like genuine attributes of the assumed physical objects. The principal reasons leading to this doctrine of the subjectivity of color, sound, taste and smell have, of course, been the relativity of these qualities to the varying conditions of the sensory mechanism of individuals, and the fact that 'presentations' of these qualities can be induced in an individual consciousness by the mechanical excitation of the organs of sense, without the presence of any object in which other observers can discover the specific qualities apprehended by that individual. Our perception of the primary qualities, so far as this distinction alone is concerned, might well be direct and without the intermediation of images; but the secondary qualities are a sort of wedding-garment which the object is compelled to put on when it 'enters the mind.' Or, according to the more usual, dualistic view, both kinds of qualities enter the mind in the form of ideas, but certain of these are similar to attributes of the object, while others are not. In Locke's words: "The ideas of primary qualities are resemblances of them, and their patterns do really exist in the bodies

themselves; but the ideas produced in us by these secondary qualities have no resemblance of them at all. They are, in the bodies we denominate from them, only a power to produce those sensations in us; and what is sweet, blue, or warm in idea, is but the certain bulk, figure and motion of the insensible parts in the bodies themselves, which we call so."

But if, as our new theorists maintain, there are no such entities as ideas, the secondary qualities can be as little subjective as the primary. If perception can have only things and their qualities for its content, all qualities which actually present themselves in perception must be imputed to the actual objects which we are supposed directly to perceive. This consequence of epistemological monism has been generally apprehended and, indeed, enthusiastically proclaimed by its representatives in both England and America. Alexander, for example, observes that while "it is true that physical science confines itself to the study of the primary qualities of matter and treats of the secondary only so far as they are conditioned by the primary," yet this does not "amount to a denial that the secondary qualities in their secondary form are physical. . . . And if you insist in denying blue, as such, to be physical, I reply that it was shown ages ago, for equally good reasons, that the primary qualities must be denied to be physical." Since this last negation is something which no realist can tolerate, the only way out, obviously, was to turn to the other extreme and declare that all the sensible properties of matter are equally objective and non-mental.⁶

(c) The objects which we are said to be conscious of, or to 'have in mind,' are, as everyone knows, not always supposed to exist as real things at the moments at which we are conscious of them. Memory, for example, chances to be one way of being conscious of objects; and its objects always have a different date from the memory-image by which they

⁶ *Proc. Ar. Soc.*, ix, 1908-9, pp. 5-6.

appear to be in some fashion represented. Even in actual perception the existence of the 'real object' need not be—in a sense, it never is—identical in point of time with the existence of a percept of that object. There is the hackneyed instance of the star which I perceive now, though the real star has, a thousand years since, ceased to be present at the position in space in which it appears. By reason of the fact that even the quickest of our mental processes are not absolutely instantaneous, there must be assumed to be in all cases at least some slight difference between the instant when a certain state or position of a given object is perceived and the instant when the object was actually in that state or position.

But it is an implication of the theory we are examining that the star which has been extinct for a millennium is none the less the same star which is at this present moment in my consciousness. It might, perhaps, at first be thought that the theory need imply only that *some* real star is at present perceived by me. Since only things, and not ideas, occur in consciousness, the star must be a thing; but must it be that particular thing which has ceased to be? But in fact the adherents of epistemological monism usually appear to hold that the thing in consciousness is not only some objective thing, but also *the* objective thing which it appears to be, that a given percept is numerically identical with the particular body which is the source of the stimuli acting upon our sense-organs and producing just that perception. Any other interpretation of their doctrine would, indeed, involve it in singular paradoxes. But so, manifestly, does this interpretation. It is hard to state this aspect of the theory in words which do not have at least the look of a contradiction in terms. For the implication in question precisely is that that which is present in my consciousness, which is my perceptual content *now*, is one and the same being with something that does not now exist. In other words, the denial of ideas would appear to entail the assertion that a thing may exist at a time when it does not exist.

(d) A feature of our perceptual content which a very early and obvious reflection taught mankind to regard as subjective, as 'mere appearance,' is to be seen in those organic illusions which are necessary consequences of the character of the physical or physiological mechanism involved in perception. Such are the phenomena of perspective and the distortions due to the refraction of light by the different media through which it passes. These are normal characteristics of objects, as experienced; it is impossible for the most profound physicist to *see* the straight stick thrust partly under water otherwise than as bent. But the savage and the child very early recognize that it only 'looks bent' and is not 'really' so, and thus learn to distrust the evidence of sense. They do so because the evidence of the sense of sight conflicts with that of touch—if, at least, as mankind has always supposed, the several senses, in spite of their utter dissimilarity, deal with the same objects in a single spatial system. At the point in space at which an angle in the stick is seen, no angle is felt. And men in this matter have chosen to regard touch rather than vision as veridical. They have ultimately done so largely because the report of the object given by tactual sensation can be made to fit into a fairly consistent and satisfactory intellectual reconstruction of the world of objects, as the report of visual sensation can not. It is to be observed that this reconstruction does not 'explain' these false appearances by any supposed property of 'ideas.' Their explanation is physical, not psychological. The distortions occur, not merely 'outside of consciousness' but (many of them) also outside of the body. The 'image' of the stick is bent on the camera-plate, as well as 'in the mind.' This does not alter the fact that what does appear in perception is different in its characteristics from the object which is supposed to be, by means of that perception, known or apprehended.

What, now, is the implication of the monistic theory of perception with respect to this class of content? Since the

theory holds that all sensation "guarantees the extra-mentality of its content," the proper conclusion would seem to be that the stick has objectively *both* of the characters which the two senses reveal it as having: that it is at once straight and bent. Some adherents of the theory, however, are naturally desirous of evading a consequence so peculiar; and they therefore make much of the circumstance already noted, that these illusions are fully explained by natural science and that in the explanations any reference to consciousness or ideas is found quite superfluous. Thus Woodbridge asks: "If we want to know why the stick appears bent and not straight, is not the answer water? Is not the case now disposed of? It is water which makes the straight stick appear bent, *but not the eyes*. The senses deceive us because, not revealing the causes why things appear as they do, we are led astray. The moment that we discover that it is water which makes the stick appear bent, we can allow for the refraction and be satisfied. But this is not a matter of epistemology, but of action, of stimulus and of response."⁷ Yet, one must repeat, since the appearance after all does misrepresent the particular object, or the particular portion of space, *of* which it is an appearance, there is still no escape from the admission that the content in perception is not identical with *that* object—whatever else it may be identical with. One might, perhaps, hold that it is identical with the image on the retina, in which the distortion due to the unequal refracting power of air and water has already taken place. This would permit one to maintain after a fashion the non-mental, *i. e.*, the physical, character of the perceived content. But it would not be after the fashion of the epistemological monist that one then maintained it.

(e) It has long been assumed by nearly all men that certain content—that, namely, which is presented in dreams, in

⁷ Woodbridge, "The Deception of the Senses," *Jour. of Philosophy*, x, 1913, p. 9.

hallucinations and in those illusions which are peculiar to individuals—is 'subjective appearance' only, having no being apart from or independently of the individual consciousnesses in which it occurs. This assumption, it is true, apparently was not made by primitive man. Dream-experiences seem to be looked upon by the savage as not essentially different from other experiences; and they play an especially large part in determining his beliefs about the world. The invention of a category of the merely subjective was a definite step forward in the intellectual history of mankind; and it was the first step in the history of the belief in ideas. Here was a class of experienced entities which it clearly seemed impossible to regard as 'things.' For this class of perceptual or quasi-perceptual content is, in the first place, usually private and unshared; it does not belong to that world of public objects of which the existence and nature can be verified by the generality of observers. It has no social currency. This, however, is the least of its infirmities. Its most serious fault is that, if we attempt to find a place for it in that single coherent physical order to which 'objective' things are supposed to belong, we are involved in propositions which appear self-contradictory. We are compelled to say that a given object has two incompatible qualities—that, for example, at a single moment the same surface of the object has two colors or two shapes. And we are compelled to say that the same portion of space is occupied by two different bodies, or is both filled and not filled by a material body. For the victim of a hallucination, gazing upon the same space which others behold and seeing in part the same objects, sees them as possessing qualities contradictory of the qualities which they present to other eyes; or sees regions of space which for others are empty, occupied by interesting or alarming objects; or sees objects of one kind in the same space where others see objects of a wholly different kind. Since the possession of contradictory qualities by the same thing has usually seemed to men irreconcilable with the very notion of

a 'real' thing having a 'nature' of its own; and since the presence of two bodies in the same space has similarly appeared incongruous with the conception of 'body' and the properties ascribed to space;—for these reasons above all, it has been found necessary to conceive of a realm of thoughts which are not things, or even copies of things, to recognize 'being in consciousness' as a special, limited, extra-spatial mode of existence, which alone is to be ascribed to the unsharable and contradiction-breeding type of perceived content. Thus the most important practical function of the conception of consciousness, or of 'minds,' at all times has been that it has enabled men to keep their conception of nature unpolluted by contradictions. It has, as it were, distributed the elements that would otherwise have been contradictory amongst a number of closed and insulated compartments. The contents of any one of these might be, and in fact often were, entirely in conflict with the contents of any other, or of the supposed world of real objects which was over against them all; but this has been felt to do no injury to the intelligibility of things, to offer no insuperable obstacle to the operation of the human reason, provided that no contradiction was found within the limits of any one of these systems (at any one moment), and provided, above all, that the objective system was kept free from inner logical discord.

If, however, "sensational experience of whatever sort" be held to "guarantee the extra-mentality of its object," this ancient and serviceable device must apparently be given up. Hallucinatory content must be placed in the same objective world of things with the objects of normal perception; and the resultant contradictions must either be resolved and shown to be only apparent; or, if this be impossible, self-contradiction must be accepted as a genuine characteristic of things and be regarded as constituting no evidence of unreality. At least one neo-realistic writer has, though not without wavering, adopted this last view as the proper conse-

quence of the epistemological monism to which he adheres. Others have sought to explain the contradictions away, or at least to make them seem very little ones. One sympathizer with the new doctrine, for example, has quoted with glee a remark of Lord Kelvin's, that he sees no reason why two bodies should not occupy the same space. Another has urged that we actually experience this 'dual space-occupancy'—when, namely, we 'see' an image in the space behind a mirror where we can at the same moment feel the wall. There is a marked tendency among new realists to deal with the difficulty about the contradictory qualities which it would seem necessary to impute to objects—if all the qualities which any object is ever perceived by anybody as having are assumed to be objectively possessed by it—by assimilating the notion of quality to that of relation. That a thing has one relation to A and a different and incongruous relation to B, is regarded by no one as a violation of the principle of contradiction. If, then, a thing's qualities also can be treated as belonging to it only in specified relations to other things, it may, without damage to the logical proprieties, possess as many and as discrepant qualities as you please. On the other hand, one of the founders of the new doctrine about consciousness repudiates all this relativism and juggling with contradictions, and declares that the paradoxes into which many of his school have been led to resort, in their attempt to reconcile their monistic epistemology with the fact of hallucinations, will, if not checked, be fatal to the whole movement.

Into the discussion of these various ways of dealing with the problem I do not mean, at this point, to enter. I mention them now only to show that the denial of ideas is generally acknowledged to involve the assertion of the objectivity of the hallucinatory; and that the latter has caused great difficulties for the philosophers inclined to the former, and has set them violently at variance with one another.

What all this elaboration of familiar—but, by the theorists

in question, long oddly neglected—considerations shows is that the belief in mental representations is not, at all events, a groundless and functionless philosophical superstition, but a natural product of human reflection upon certain common human experiences. It has been applied by mankind to one class of content after another for perfectly intelligible reasons; and it has rendered man, in his progressive effort to gain a rational understanding of the world he lives in, certain definite and genuine services. If it is to be abandoned, the falsity of the reasons which have historically generated it must first be demonstrated; and some other clear hypothesis must be presented to render intelligible the facts which it has in the past been supposed to make less alien to man's reason.

Before, however, I proceed to the examination of the reasons which have led so many contemporary philosophers wholly to reject this belief in ideas, it will be worth while to notice the relation of this philosophical movement to certain tendencies recently apparent among psychologists. The proposal to eliminate the method of introspection from psychology seems at first sight to be but another manifestation of the same "revolt against the tyranny of images"; for the principal ground for this proposal appears to be the conviction that there is nothing to introspect—that is, that there is no peculiarly inward or 'subjective' variety of empirical facts, which can be reached only through a peculiar type of observation, unlike that employed by the other sciences. The repudiation of the method of introspection in psychology would therefore appear to imply a monistic theory of perception, and *vice versa*; while epistemological dualism and the belief in the possibility of introspection would similarly seem to go together. Professor Dunlap in a recent paper has dwelt upon the connection between the psychological notion of introspection and the epistemological theory of representative ideas. According to the once common view, he remarks, "there are thoughts, which are known, and things

corresponding to the thoughts, which are also known. A cabbage is known, and there is also in the 'stream of consciousness' a 'thought' of a cabbage, which is known, no matter by what. If this sort of representationalism is accepted, there is no objection to calling the knowing of a thought [as distinct from the knowing of the thought's object] 'introspection.' But to Professor Dunlap such representationalism seems wholly a disused mode, an outworn theme. "The day for such psychical mechanics," he writes, "has gone by. The ghostly world of representational 'ideas' or 'states of consciousness,' dim shadows through which we may look at the real objects casting them, . . . attracts no longer faith or interest. There are probably no psychologists at the present time who hold to 'introspection' explicitly on these representational grounds. If there are such, I certainly do not wish to argue the point with them."⁸

It is evident, however, that the 'representationalism' or epistemological dualism here referred to affirms the 'mental' character of *all* the immediate content of perception. What is discovered in consciousness, it declares, is in every case primarily an 'idea,' though it may be an idea representative of an external object. If, then, the apprehension of an idea is to be called introspection, all perception (as Professor Dunlap himself has elsewhere noted) would, according to representationalism, be introspection. The chemist watching a reaction would be introspecting; for he would be observing content which, by hypothesis, is primarily mental. But when the notion of introspection is thus generalized it becomes meaningless; it fails to mark any distinction between the procedure of the psychologist and the procedure of the physical scientist. What this proves is not the falsity of representationalism, but merely its independence of the distinction between introspection and external observation. The "case against introspection" might indeed, plausibly be put upon

⁸ Dunlap, "The Case Against Introspection," *Psych. Rev.*, 19, 1912.

representationalist grounds. Those who believe all content to be ideas, it might be argued, are least of all likely to find any place for a special mode of acquaintance with content, needing to be distinguished from other modes by the name of introspection.

This, however, though plausible would not be accurate. The representationalist might still discriminate amongst ideas, and hold that certain of them are material for introspection only, in a sense in which the others are not so describable. For example, those among our ideas which are regarded as not corresponding to 'real objects' might be defined as accessible exclusively to introspection. This is, in fact, apparently one of the ways in which people in general make their distinction between introspection and ordinary observation. When I report the sort of content which I get in the case of a tactual or visual illusion, I am said to be introspecting, for the reason that the content is held to be 'subjective'—not in the sense in which, by the epistemological dualist, *all* content is held to be subjective, but in quite another sense. Yet in such a case I am doing essentially the same thing as when I report how an object of which my perception is supposed to be veridical feels or looks; I am simply telling what sort of content is there. Again, when I try to remember how a street which I saw in a dream looked, I should by many be said to introspect; when I try to remember how Baltimore Street looks, I should not be said by most people to introspect. Yet, once more, I am in both instances but describing objects which actually appeared in my consciousness. The first object, however, happens to be one which nobody else saw or could see, which is so impermanent that even I can not return to it for further verifying observations, which can not be fitted into the dynamic system of physical nature set forth by natural science; while the other object—even though it too be supposed to be primarily but my representation—appears to agree with other people's perceptions, to be relatively stable and sus-

ceptible of further observation, and to correspond with those hypotheses about the order of physical events which science accepts. I do not say that this contrast would adequately define the difference between introspection and physical observation. I say only that it would define a difference by means of which a clear distinction between the two could be set up within the limits of the general representationalist scheme of things.

The contrast between that content which is 'subjective,' in the sense that it is not open directly to the observation of other people and is not taken to be truly representative of any 'real object,' and that content which appears to more than one observer and passes for veridical,—this must be made by the Lockian dualist as well as by anyone else, and affords him a natural way of discriminating the ideas that are introspectible only from those others which, though also 'mental,' are believed by him to correspond in some fashion to extra-mental realities. The same discrimination could be made in substantially the same way by the Berkeleyian idealist; the only difference would be that the veridical representations would by him be defined as corresponding, not to wholly extramental realities, but to the perceptions of other minds, and as conforming to the prevailing uniformities of the sequence of natural events. 'True' perceptions would be those agreeing with what a great man of science has not long since described as the only "objective" physical reality which we can know anything of: "what is, will become, or will remain, common to all thinking beings."⁹

There is possible, then, no direct inference from the belief that the immediate content of perception consists of ideas to the conclusion that introspection, in any practically useful sense of that word, is an essential procedure in psychology. The representationalist's assertion of the mental character of percepts is not equivalent to a vindication of the introspective

⁹ Poincaré, *The Value of Science*, in *Pop. Sci. Mo.*, Vol. 71, p. 63.

method. But on the other hand, his scheme *permits* a clear differentiation of introspection and other observation and a recognition of the possibility of both processes.

What, however, shall we say of the logical relation between epistemological monism (of the realistic sort) and the recognition of a class of content accessible to introspection only? Can one who denies the existence of ideas and of mental states *in toto* find room in his world for any content of this type? The answer will, of course, depend upon the meaning here to be assigned to the term. The "specⁿtion" certainly cannot be directed "inward"; even in the case of illusions the data observed must, as we have seen, upon monistic principles be 'extra-mental.' But, it would appear, there can be certain content which is directly accessible to *one observer* only. The interesting hypothesis presented elsewhere in this *Circular* by Professor Dunlap, while it is a clear case of epistemological monism, expressly recognizes that certain data, both of sensation and thought, are not open to general observation, but can be reached and attested at first hand only by the individual within whose body they occur. My muscle-sensations, according to this view, are not representations; they are an actual physical condition of the muscle. But that condition can never, as such, be 'in the consciousness' of anyone but myself. The same, I suppose, would be said of illusions, hallucinations and dreams. While their content is held to be objective, it is certainly not publicly verifiable; and the strictly private awareness of it might also very naturally be called introspection. It would thus follow that the epistemological monist may take, with regard to introspection, much the same position as his dualistic opponent; he too may acknowledge the existence of purely introspectible material, in a natural and definite sense of the expression—which, for all the practical purposes of psychology, is the same sense as that in which the term is employed by the representationalist.

Yet, in spite of the plausibility of this, reflection suggests

one or two difficulties in the conjunction of a disbelief in representations with a belief in introspection. One is compelled to ask, in the first place, in what sense content which exists only in my private consciousness is declared to be objective or extra-mental. If it is not merely ideas, wherein is it differentiated from ideas? And even if the differentia were formulated how could it be applied? How could one determine by introspection solely whether a given datum were mental or physical? Is the muscle sensation which nobody but myself knows or ever can know—except through my report of it—external in the sense that it fills a portion of space which is, so to say, otherwise unaccounted for? Evidently not; the 'objective' space which the muscle occupies can be fully explored by the senses of other observers. Is the muscle sensation, again, a part of that system of forces with which the equations of the physicist deal? Apparently not that, either; just in so far as the sensation is private and inalienable, it contains a residual somewhat which refuses to enter the realm of publicly verifiable facts with which alone physical science is concerned. This sensation may be accompanied by an energy-transfer; but it cannot *be* the latter, for energy-transfers are not discovered through introspection. But if the content that is accessible only to introspection is not objective in either of the ways indicated, in what way is it objective? Has it not all the marks of a subjective datum—inasmuch as it is present in a particular, individual complex of consciousness, and is not shown, or even in any intelligible sense asserted, to have any other existence beyond its presence in that consciousness? Is not this kind of existent precisely what is usually meant by 'a mere idea'? These questions suggest a suspicion that the belief in the existence of purely introspectible or private content is one which can not easily be reconciled with epistemological monism.

Another difficulty presents itself when we recall that we are, after all, supposed to have some knowledge about the

facts known to other people through their introspection. We can not possess these data directly as sensations, and we are always ultimately dependent for our knowledge of their existence upon the testimony of the subjects of them. But with this given, we can (as the view now under consideration seems to imply) make them the objects of our thought. Without having them directly in our consciousness (which would be contradictory of the privacy ascribed to them), we may yet have in our consciousness something which, by the hypothesis in question, stands for, refers to, and forms the basis for a knowledge of, these existences. Such a view, however, seems to bear a strong family resemblance to representationalism. It is fully committed to the assertion of the duality (in this particular case) of a thing represented and a somewhat which represents it. It will not do for the holder of this hypothesis to say that the actual content of my consciousness, when I think of some purely personal experience of my neighbor's, is identically a *part*, though not the whole, of that experience itself. For what I am thinking of is, by definition, precisely that part of his experience which is *not* my content and which yet is the object to which my thought refers. And the 'thought' which so refers is itself, surely, a bit of my content, as are the very notion of 'reference' and the express distinction between the content now present to me and the external reality which it enables me to 'know.' Here, then, we have a situation of exactly the same type as that which the representationalist, or dualistic realist, believes to be exemplified also in our acquaintance with physical objects.

There is, however, another new and much discussed doctrine among psychologists which does not hesitate to deny the existence of any content essentially limited to a single perceiver and therefore verifiable only through introspection. This is the theory known as behaviorism, which proposes to convert psychology into a strictly "objective study of human and animal behavior." Professor Watson has recently

defended this proposal with especial clarity and boldness. "The time has come," he writes, "when psychology must discard all reference to consciousness: when it no longer need delude itself into thinking that it is making mental states the object of observation." It really "needs introspection as little as the sciences of chemistry and physics." Its goal is *not* "description and explanation of states of consciousness as such"; its business is merely to study, through carefully devised experiments, the observable responses of different organisms to diverse stimuli, to ascertain the laws of the acquisition and retention of skill in their non-instinctive activities, and the like. Even when such experimentation is applied to the human subject "we care as little about his conscious processes during the conduct of the experiment as we care about such processes in the rats" which may serve as subjects of study for the specialist in animal behavior.¹⁰

In so far as this interesting view is defended on merely practical and methodological grounds, it has not necessarily serious philosophical implications. And, clearly, it is largely upon such grounds that it has been defended by Professor Watson. In the paper last quoted he refrains from denying, though also from affirming, the reality of a realm of "purely psychic existences." One of the sentences cited, indeed, intimates that in the human subject there may be conscious processes going on during the conduct of the experiment; the point is only that the psychologist as a man of science has no concern with them. What the behaviorist primarily feels is that, if a purely inner or mental realm exists, it is not, at any rate, accessible to the experimental method strictly construed; and that the introspective method has by this time proved itself incapable of yielding properly scientific results—results which are exact, quantitatively formulable, and verifiable by all trained investigators. It is this sense of

¹⁰ Watson, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," *Psych. Rev.*, **xx**, 1913, pp. 158 ff.

the unproductiveness, the indecisiveness and the lack of practical applicability of all introspective psychology which seems to have led some to behaviorism; not a philosophical conviction that there is in organic responses no consciousness distinct from physical behavior. It is, then, only when behaviorism is taken as implying this last proposition that it manifests a resemblance to epistemological monism and becomes a suitable subject for the consideration of the philosopher. The proposition, however, is frequently supposed to be a part of the behaviorist's doctrine; and the dogma that consciousness *is* behavior was expressly proclaimed by Professor Singer some years ago.¹¹ It is, then, pertinent to the purposes of this paper to note the logical relations of this more radical behaviorism to epistemological monism.

It may be said to be in agreement with what the latter denies but not with what it affirms. What is present when I perceive an object, the radical behaviorist tells me, is never an image of the object, or even a set of sensations discriminable from the physiological processes of the sense-organs. In repudiating the image, then, this newest psychology is at one with the new realism. But beyond this point the two doctrines sharply diverge. This divergence it is easy to overlook because of a common failure to note the implications of the position of the behaviorist. The thesis that what has usually been called 'consciousness' is really nothing but 'behavior' is, as we have seen, put forward primarily as a statement concerning the object of the psychologist's investigations. What he 'knows,' when his inquiries are successful, are facts about behavior; what he perceives, when he observes a subject, is, it might be supposed, the actual physical bodies (*i. e.*, the parts of the organism) and their motions, in which behavior consists. His doctrine, however, takes on a somewhat different aspect when we remember that the proposition 'consciousness is behavior' must apply to know-

¹¹ *Jour. of Philosophy*, **viii**, 1911, p. 180.

ing, and even to the knowledge of the psychologist himself. This is a consideration upon which our behaviorists seem thus far to have bestowed small attention. They have apparently been little interested in the odd—and, surely, the important—fact that much of our so-called behavior, and specifically the behavior of the psychological investigator, is, or purports to be, cognitive; that it is supposed to give us information about realities external to itself, to enable us to know entities outside the spatial limits of our own bodies. The behaviorist for the most part ignores the epistemological problems which are inseparably connected with the psychological problem of perception; yet his psychological account of the matter, in so far as it professes to be a complete account, evidently implies an epistemological theory. For him, the actual content of my percept of an object is neither a mental image of the object, *nor yet the object itself*; it is certain bodily processes within me—minute movements of the muscles of the eye, neural excitations associated therewith, perhaps incipient word-forming movements in the vocal organs, and so on. The behaviorist assumes, to be sure, that these physiological performances are stimulated by the action of physical objects, and in the external reality of these objects he appears implicitly to believe. But his account of the nature of cognitive consciousness does not make it intelligible how either he, or the subject of his study, can ever know those objects; and it certainly implies that a direct—or, in truth, that any—apprehension of them *by* any subject is impossible. For obviously, the real object cannot, as a rule, be supposed to leave its place in space and physically enter my body; and ‘knowing,’ therefore, if it is to be regarded as a kind of bodily behavior, cannot consist in any actual access to the object. Or, to put the same point in other words, a percept which is a motion inside my organism cannot be ‘numerically identical’ with a thing, or a quality, or even a motion, which, *ex hypothesi*, is not inside my organism. Thus the epistemology implied in behaviorism, whatever else be said

of it, is manifestly inharmonious with epistemological monism. It may be described as a sort of corporeal subjectivism; and it is no less at variance with the new realist’s doctrine of the ‘numerical identity of percept and real object’ than is the older psychical subjectivism. The two theories, in short, are radically opposed in their accounts—implicit in the one case, explicit in the other—of the nature of perception, and of cognition in general. The realistic epistemological monist agrees with the dualist at least upon one point, and in this they maintain a common opposition to the behaviorist—namely, in holding that consciousness can make us acquainted, *either* directly or indirectly, with objects remote in space and in time, and not merely with states or movements of our own bodies.

There has, it is true, been propounded not long since a hypothesis which has the air of reconciling epistemological monism with something resembling behaviorism. In his contribution to *The New Realism* Professor Holt has contended that, on the one hand, the real external world known to science must have all qualitative differences reduced to quantitative differences in space-and-time-characters; and that, on the other hand, we have reason to think that the nerve-processes in which our sensations consist are vibratory impulses having in each case the same rates of vibration as the external vibrations in which colors, sounds, etc. ‘objectively’ consist. Both these things being admitted, a sensation could be identified with a bodily motion, and this motion would be the same—*i. e.*, would be describable by the same formula—as the extra-corporeal motions giving rise to it. Unfortunately this short and easy method is confronted with two awkward facts. Its generalization about the periodicities of nerve-impulses seems to be a more than dubious piece of physiology; and in any case, the actual content of our perception is not composed merely of quantitatively diverse vibrations, but of qualities—reds, blues, sounds, smells, etc. It can not possibly, therefore, be iden-

tical with a series of qualityless processes, either within or without our bodies. It should be added that the author of this speculation himself finally affirms epistemological monism in a way which negates the theory of knowledge involved in any thorough-going behaviorism. For he declares that, in spite of what the theory just outlined might seem to imply, consciousness, when localized at all, "is *not* in the skull" or anywhere else in the body, "but is 'out there' precisely wherever it appears to be"—i. e., wherever its objects are. Though there is obviously a "connection between modifications of the nervous system and changes in consciousness, this connection can be in other ways than that of a spatial inclusion of consciousness by the nervous system." What is in consciousness when one sees a colored object is "that color out there" which "is 'on' a particular object." But, since one's 'behavior' certainly cannot be 'out there,' this can only mean that there is something more to consciousness than behavior—that it by some means or other *knows* objects external to the body, and 'gets at' them, even across great gulfs of intervening space. Thus the monistic or neo-realistic theory of perception and radical behaviorism still remain unreconciled.

This should suffice for making clear the relations of these new movements in psychological theory to the type of epistemological doctrine under consideration in this paper. To the criticism of radical behaviorism I do not propose on this occasion to devote any space; I need, for present purposes, only say that in what follows it is assumed that, with respect to the point at which both epistemological monism and dualism are in conflict with behaviorism, the general position of the two former doctrines is the only tenable one—in other words, that perceiving and knowing objects, whatever else these transactions prove to be, can certainly not be adequately formulated in terms of behavior and treated as purely intracorporeal events. We may, therefore, now return to our principal theme, and attempt to enumerate and to examine the

logical motives which have had the chief part in inspiring the contemporary revolt against the belief in ideas.

The movement has in the main, as we have seen, been incidental to a revival of realism; it is primarily to be understood as an expression of a reaction against the subjectivism with which idealism is supposed by many to be identified. A complete analysis of the sources of the tendency in which we are here interested would, accordingly, make necessary an examination of the reasons which have, after the long dominance of idealism of one sort or another, brought realism back into fashion even among academic philosophers. But that is too large an inquiry to be entered upon here. For present purposes it suffices to recall the fact that the current denial of the existence of mental representations has for the most part been generated in the course of an attempt to reformulate and to justify a thorough-going realism—which includes not only physical, but also something approximating the Platonic, realism. This, however, by no means explains the prevailing drift towards epistemological monism, since one of the familiar forms of realism, perhaps the commonest philosophical form of it, is dualistic, and affirms the existence of both ideas and extra-mental things. The first of the papers in this *Circular* defends a realism of this type. It is, therefore, into the reasons which have given so much of the realism of our time a monistic turn, that we have here to inquire.

(1) One of the causes of the reaction, clearly, is to be found in a once prevalent confusion about the meaning of 'consciousness' and the relation of the belief in its existence to the belief in the existence of ideas. And for this confusion the philosophers of the past who have held the latter belief have been largely responsible. They have often tended to mean by consciousness both that mode or that realm of being in which ideas subsist, and also that supposed introspectively discoverable entity—quite distinct from ordinary perceptual or ideational or affective content—about whose reality I ex-

pressed doubts at the outset of this inquiry. Consciousness thus came to be looked upon as a sort of directly, though only inwardly, observable stuff or *menstruum*, in which ideas observably floated; and the fortunes of the supposition that ideas exist were thus unhappily linked with the fortunes of the doctrine that this kind of consciousness exists and is observable. When, therefore, James and other latter-day philosophers began to be sceptical about this supposed peculiar consciousness-fluid, they not unnaturally proceeded to throw out the baby with the bath—since they had long been given to understand that the baby's existence was inseparable from that of the bath. The assumption, however, was an entirely mistaken one. The question about the existence of ideas is independent of the question about the verifiable actuality of consciousness as a unique introspectible datum not reducible to mere content. The former question is primarily this: does any (or all) content present in the sense-perceptions or thoughts of individuals have an other than physical existence? Now physical existence is—at least within the limits of the realistic hypothesis—a comparatively simple and clearly definable notion. An existent is said to be physical if it is itself extended, if it has a *locus* in a three-dimensional space which is *public* (*i. e.*, within which the objects of other percipients also have their *loci*), and if it possesses energy, or is a portion of some form of energy, and “enters as a factor into the executive order of the material world.” Professor Stout, one of the few writers on our problem who has taken the precaution of defining ‘physical’ and ‘mental,’ would add that it belongs to the nature of physical things that no two of them can at the same moment occupy the same portion of space¹²—*i. e.*, of the one, universal, public space. This is certainly a postulate of common sense and of much of our physics, and one which I can not but think a necessary one. Yet, since it is, as we have seen, doubted by

¹² *Proc. Ar. Soc.*, ix, 1908-9, pp. 226-7.

some physicists and denied by some neo-realistic philosophers, and since this denial is the *cruz* of much of the controversy about ideas, it is perhaps more just to refrain from putting this postulate into our definition of the physical, without further qualification or argument. It is not improper, however, to set down this requirement of single space-occupancy as an element in one of the common meanings of ‘physical’; and to ask those who deny the existence of ideas whether they do or do not accept this meaning, and if not, how they justify their belief in multiple space-occupancy.

The existence of ideas, then, means the existence, in a perceptual field, of content which can not be regarded as physical, in the sense—or, with respect to the last-mentioned point, in one or the other of the two alternative senses—just indicated. But if ideas can be shown so to exist, it would follow that, in an equally definite sense, consciousness exists also—namely, as the realm of being ‘in’ which non-physical content is.

(2) Another old confusion contributory to the genesis of the revolt against ideas attaches to the term ‘subjective.’ By the ‘subject’ of consciousness is usually meant some central, unifying point of reference which it is thought necessary to assume as the explanation of the individuation of complexes of content, as the focus through their common relation to which the elements of a perceptual field get their “unique sort of togetherness.” In this sense the ‘subject,’ or Ego, is antithetic to ‘the object’—to the concrete content, possessing definite sensible or other qualities, which is over against it and is ‘for’ it, or ‘belongs to’ it. But if the contrast of ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ be taken as parallel in meaning to this subject-object polarity, it is undeniable that *no* perceptual or thought content is subjective. It is of the essence of the antithesis that all determinate objects of consciousness shall, as Schuppe has put it, not be *in den Ich-Punkt hineingesetzt*, but shall be conceived to be external to the subject. Even the things beheld in dreams or hallu-

cinations are, in this sense, wholly objective; they, not less than true physical entities, stand in the 'over-against' relation to the Ego—whatever else may be meant by that term. But this, again, proves nothing against the existence of ideas as actually given content of a non-physical sort,—or, again, as content which is *not* objective in the quite different sense of being identically the same existent in the consciousness-complexes of different subjects.

(3) The believers in ideas have not infrequently argued that, since ideas, if they exist, must be 'in the mind,' and since the mind is inextended and immaterial, ideas also must be inextended and destitute of the sensible qualities which material objects are supposed to possess. But if by 'ideas' we are to mean the *content* of perception or thought, this conclusion is manifestly inadmissible. For the content consists (in part) of sensible qualities having a spatial configuration and spatial magnitude. Inasmuch as what I see is a rectangular brown desk, and inasmuch also as what I see is supposed (by the representationalist) to be immediately present to me merely as a sensation or idea, it necessarily follows that the idea must be described as brown and rectangular. That such a way of describing it seems to many paradoxical can only be due to their confusing the notion of 'sensing'—i. e., the process supposed to be involved in the apprehension of sense-content—with the notion of sense-content itself, both of which notions have commonly been expressed by the single word 'sensation.' There has been a similar confusion arising out of the ambiguity of the words perception and thought, which have, respectively, stood indifferently for perceiving or thinking, and also for the content perceived or thought. Now the processes of sensing or perceiving or thinking, if it be necessary to assume their existence, must doubtless (unless by the behaviorist) be regarded as non-spatial and as destitute of sensible qualities. My thinking of the desk evidently ought not to be described as a brown and rectangular thinking. It is, then, this view

about mental processes which has, through the confusion indicated, been improperly applied to mental content. When the confusion is corrected, it becomes clear that ideas can no longer be considered entities of so ghostly a sort as they have often been supposed to be. Their attributes are in large part of precisely the same type as the attributes imputed to 'things.' They are usually extended and they have, or may have, all manner of sensible properties. The critics of the belief in ideas have been wont to point this out; and they have passed somewhat easily from this true proposition to the conclusion that the so-called ideas are nothing but 'things.' This transition in the argument is well illustrated by a few sentences from the article in which Woodbridge attempts to show the groundlessness of the belief in sensations.

One does not ordinarily or readily believe that his consciousness or his mind is made up of colors, tastes, sounds, smells, and the like. Indeed, most well-trained and scientifically minded persons experience a shock if they are told that consciousness is so constituted. They may be willing to admit that they are conscious only when they see or hear or perform some similar operation, but they find consciousness unrecognizable when told that it is made up of what they see and hear. The psychologist . . . is under the serious obligation of showing by what right he regards the distinctively qualitative characters of these objects as sensations, mental elements, mental functions or mental processes; by what right he regards as conscious or mental anything whatsoever which is characteristic of the object."¹³

The last sentence here, perhaps, involves the confusion noted in the previous section (2). One sense in which the sensible qualities presented in perception are undeniably "characteristic of the object" is that they belong to the object-side of the subject-object relation. This, however, as we have seen, by no means establishes their objectivity. But Woodbridge's main point in the passage quoted evidently is

¹³ "The Belief in Sensations," *Jour. of Philosophy*, x, 1913, p. 604.

that the data said to be 'in the mind' have qualities essentially like those of objects not in the mind, are indistinguishable from what one means by objects, and ought not, therefore, to be classified as mental.

If, however, 'mental' means 'non-physical,' the conclusion, it is plain, does not follow from the premises. There is nothing in the fact that sensory content is spatial to show that it is 'in space'—i. e., once more, in that single, public space in which, presumably, the 'real things' of the realist have their location. And there is nothing in the fact that certain sensory content presents the same sort of qualities as the realist's physical objects are supposed to possess, to show that that content is itself composed of physical objects. If, indeed, there were no reasons for hesitating to identify the private or subjective spaces in which our sense-data primarily appear with 'objective' space, or for hesitating to identify all qualitative content presented in consciousness with similarly qualified entities supposed to exist quite outside of consciousness, we might properly make these identifications, in the interest of intellectual economy. But there are, as we have already seen, definite and positive reasons why we should hesitate to do this.

(4) The distinction between processes and content has, as I have just now remarked, been especially emphasized by some of the antagonists of the doctrine of ideas; and several important representatives of epistemological monism have expressly affirmed the reality of mental processes, while denying that any mental content exists. This conception of consciousness or awareness as a pure operation untouched by the attributes of the things with which it is concerned, has been ingeniously utilized by some recent writers as a means of escape from certain of the usual objections brought against the monistic theory of perception. It has been employed by none more ingeniously or skilfully than by Professor Dunlap, in his paper printed in this *Circular*.

My perceiving or thinking, it is argued, is doubtless always

an event having a determinate date. It occurs at this or at that moment, and can be said to have being only in those moments. But, since it is a very different type of reality from the objects perceived or thought, there is no reason why its date and place and their dates and places should coincide. Thought as a process or activity has for its distinctive characteristic a power of reaching beyond temporal and spatial limits. While each concrete instance of it must exist at a *now* and (in a sense) a *here*, it frequently operates upon, finds its objective in, the not-now and the not-here. Cognitive consciousness thus, in all its phases, is pictured as resembling a search-light which can throw its beam freely forward and back, and illuminate many things which are not where it is—things distant in time as well as in space. There need, therefore, be no present content for my present consciousness. Thus the paradox which, earlier in this paper, was noted as a reproach against epistemological monism—that it compels us in certain cases to conceive¹⁴ of a thing as now existing which is at the same time known not now to exist—disappears; and it becomes unnecessary to invoke ideas to act as present attorneys for defunct objects.

Lest this reasoning be found convincing by some, it is well to begin such brief comment upon it as I have space for, by observing that this device, even if found workable, can be applied to only one of the difficulties in the path of the epistemological monist. It does nothing to remove the objections based upon the apparent occurrence in consciousness of a great mass of content of various sorts which it is impossible to regard as physical, to find room for in 'real' space, or to credit, in the full sense of the expression, with objective actuality.

There are, moreover, reasons for doubting whether the device is workable even for the limited purpose for which it is proposed to employ it. The most radical of these reasons,

¹⁴ See page 57, above.

though perhaps not the one which will most readily command assent, is the fact that one may well doubt whether, in the sense required, 'thinking' or 'perceiving' exists at all. I do not mean to deny that, in voluntary attention and other forms of conation, we have in our experience something that may properly, though not without risk of equivocality, be called mental activity. But when conative processes are distinguished from presentative and cognitive ones—from perceiving and thinking—and are set to one side, I do not myself discover what there is left on the other side to be called a mental operation. What I seem to discover, when perception occurs, is not a perceiving, but a certain complex of content, which is subject to constant change, either gradual or abrupt. 'Perception' signifies, so far as I can see, simply that these content-complexes arise and have the particular mode of being (whatever it is finally held to be) which constitutes 'being-in-consciousness.' We have just the same amount and sort of reason for being sceptical about 'consciousness' in this sense as we have for being sceptical about that indefinable consciousness-stuff, distinct from all its content, which we have seen William James attacking at the very beginning of the new 'revisionist' movement in Anglo-American philosophy and psychology. Neither consciousness-stuff nor consciousness-process is introspectively discoverable; what is so classified proves always, upon close scrutiny, to be merely a certain kind of qualitatively determinate content. And no clear reason is offered for inferring the existence of such entities, when introspection fails to disclose them. Even though, moreover, the existence of a 'thinking' irreducible to anything thought could be inferred, it would assuredly remain a very obscure and elusive sort of being, hard, if not impossible to define without making of it a piece of thought-content; and therefore far too vague and little known a thing to be confidently used as a key to one of the principal problems of the epistemology of perception.

Again—supposing that there is a thinking or awareness,

verifiably actual and wholly distinct from any object of which we are aware—can it, after all, be held that this operates without any content contemporaneous with itself? Does the reader's introspection attest that when he recalls the scenes of his childhood, the only item which can be said to form a part of his present experience is just a pure awareness—to the exclusion of all that it is aware of? Is there nothing in consciousness *now* which stands for that by-gone reality which the experience refers to and in some sense renews? Must we say that there is absolutely no re-presentation of vanished objects or past experiences? The writer, at all events, finds himself, upon attempting to analyze his own memory-phenomena, quite unable to give an affirmative answer to these questions. Professor Dunlap, it should be noted, does not give an unqualifiedly affirmative answer to them either. He recognizes that certain content is in these cases temporally coincident with the thinking process. But that content, he finds, is not images of the not-present objects, but muscle-sensations. That this description of the content in question is, for a great part of it, entirely correct, I do not doubt. My memory of the road home from my first school-house is, doubtless, largely conditioned by, if not reducible to, partial revivals of the sensations connected with the muscular movements of the eye, and other portions of the body, which I experienced when I so often saw and walked that road; and it is reinforced by the kinaesthetic sensations connected with the incipient vocalization of the names of the objects which were perceived there. But it is needful to add that these sensations, now present, do, after all, contrive somehow to take on a representative character. It cannot be denied that they in some fashion stand for the not-present—and, in part, no longer existent—objects. They are such, for example, as to enable me—if I had any skill as a draughtsman—to make a picture of some of those objects. But how, if I have not at present in consciousness some of the elements of that picture, is it possible for me at present to put it upon

paper? The picture is confessedly an image of the absent reality; does it not presuppose some sort of contemporaneous mental image of that reality?

Finally, one may recall the fact that a large part of what is called our mental activity is a dealing in futures; and that a great part of this part is concerned with futures that are never realized. But when ought we to say—in order to adapt our language to the conception just now under consideration—that the things which we foresee, but foresee erroneously, exist. The search-light of consciousness would seem to have the odd property of lighting up objects which aren't there; yet, since they undeniably do get illuminated, they must be somewhere and somewhen. Is it not the simplest thing to say of them that they have such existence as they do actually possess only at the time when the search-light is turned upon them—not at that later time when both they and, it may be, the search-light, exist neither in the objective world nor in anybody's consciousness? But if we say this of them, we have found in them a class of contents which exist synchronously with the consciousness of them, yet are not physical existents at that (or any other) time, and are, when present, not *referred to* the time at which they are present.¹⁵

(5) A still more important part in the production of contemporary epistemological monism has been played by the discovery—if a thing so obvious can be called a discovery—by several writers at once, of the possibility of conceiving of consciousness as a relation, and a relation of the sort called 'external,' *i. e.*, not constitutive of the terms related. The clear and undisputable fact about perception, as we saw at the outset, the fact from which all discussion of our problem must begin, is that things when perceived are 'in' something or other which they are not in when not perceived.

¹⁵ The point in Dunlap's paper here touched upon is, of course, closely related to another. The latter is considered below.

This has, in the past, led people to think of that which these things are in—to which the name of 'consciousness' or 'the mind' has been given—as a kind of receptacle; and since it could not be regarded as a spatial receptacle—inasmuch as the entrance of things into consciousness certainly does not consist in their being gathered into a particular space—it has been supposed to be inextended and immaterial. And then, if the things were to be 'in' this kind of receptacle or region of being, they must manifestly be despatialized and "evaporated into ideas." Some course of reasoning like this, undoubtedly, has helped to produce both the belief in ideas, and the belief (already considered in another connection) in their non-spatial character and their entire freedom from all the qualities of physical things. But, it has occurred to recent thinkers to remark, in order that things should be conceived as now in, and now not in, a somewhat, it is not necessary that that somewhat should be a receptacle, or a 'region of existence,' or a logical *genus*; it may be a relation (and not necessarily a spatial or temporal or whole-and-part relation). If, then, consciousness be defined as a relation, the 'withinness' and 'unique togetherness' which distinguish perceived from unperceived things is duly recognized; and the supposed necessity of translating things into ideas before they are capable of coming within consciousness is found to be non-existent. Things do not enter into new relations solely by begetting duplicates of themselves; they may enter in their own right, and even without any alteration or loss of their qualities and their other, more permanent, relations.

Much emphasis, for example, was laid upon the significant possibilities of the conception of relation for the problem of perception by James, in his celebrated paper of ten years ago, to which reference has more than once been made. The 'objective' room and the room that is in consciousness, are the same fact viewed in two different contexts; there is a real duality of 'things' and 'thought,' but it is a duality of re-

lations, not of existence or of qualities. If the experience of the room "were a place of intersection of two processes, which connected it with different groups of associates respectively, it could be counted twice over, as belonging to either group, and spoken of loosely as existing in two places, although it would remain all the time a numerically single thing." And this, James declared, is precisely what we find to be the case with regard to any of the contents of perception or of thought. The dualism of the dualistic realist, he implied, has been partly generated by a failure to heed the possibility of this combination of relational duality with existential identity. Other writers have made enormous use of this distinction, and our American neo-realism could scarcely have developed without it.

It seems, however, hardly worth while to discuss at length this element in the production of contemporary epistemological monism. For the principle in question—which hardly needed discovery—is doubtless true, but manifestly inconclusive of the issue concerning the existence of ideas. That a thing's 'being in consciousness' conceivably *may be* a case merely of the presence of the one real object in a special relation, is scarcely deniable. The question, however, is not one of possibility but of fact; and to that question we shall do well to return. There has, I cannot but think, been in the recent movement of opposition to the belief in ideas, some haste in passing from the argument that consciousness, or that which perceptual content is in, might conceivably be regarded as an external relation, to the conclusion that it is such a relation and cannot be conceived to be anything else.

(6) A consideration which has appeared to some minds to be highly unfavorable to the belief in ideas is its apparent irrelevancy and functionlessness in relation to all the concrete problems of positive science. This seems to have played an especially large part in determining the philosophical position of Professor Woodbridge, whose influential rôle in the movement of thought here dealt with has already been

indicated. Woodbridge has objected, indeed, not merely to the representationalist's or the idealist's proposed solutions of the epistemological problem of perception, but to the supposition that there is any epistemological problem of perception which requires to be solved. The problem, Woodbridge appears to think, is a redundant one, simply because the scientific investigators who are engaged in actually adding to the sum of our information find themselves in no need of any preliminary dabbling in epistemology.

The astronomer, the biologist, the chemist, the historian, the student of literature . . . are all engaged in increasing our knowledge of what our perceptions are and how they are related to one another. Their studies are not prefaced by an examination of how we perceive. They take their material as so much given stuff, and then proceed to tell us what, when so taken, they perceive it to be. If they are invited first to examine the mechanism of perception, they regard the invitation as impertinent and irrelevant. They have found such an examination to be unnecessary, and so believe that they can rightfully reject it.¹⁶

In short, "the results of modern intellectual inquiry" have been built up "directly from considering the processes of perception, and also the results of those processes, . . . without seeking any epistemological warrant for our procedure." We may, no doubt, apply to all this body of knowledge an epistemological scrutiny. But we thereby alter that body in no particular. "If we ask what service this scrutiny performs, we seem compelled to answer that the service is not logical, but moral and spiritual. It does not modify knowledge. It modifies character. It does not give us new or increased information about our world whereby that world may be more effectively controlled. It gives us rather considerations the contemplation of which is more or less satisfying to the spirit."¹⁷

¹⁶ "Perception and Epistemology," in *Essays . . . in Honor of William James*, 1908, p. 142.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-7.

As an indictment of the epistemological inquiries which have contributed to the belief in ideas, all this, even if its truth were admitted, does not seem very damning. To the philosopher—unless he be, in the narrowest sense, a pragmatist, which the author just cited is not—the only effective way of ruling out a problem from consideration is to show either that it is a logically meaningless problem, or else that it can antecedently be known to be insoluble. Small discredit is cast upon the attempt to solve it merely by a proof that its solution can not be used for purposes for which no intelligent person ever supposed it could be used. If epistemology, however little it enlarges our knowledge of the particular things we perceive, is able, by showing us how we perceive, to render a “moral and spiritual service,” it surely has a sufficient reason for being. It is, furthermore, quite untrue that epistemology has been functionless in the past history of natural science. The distinction between primary and secondary qualities, with the assertion of the subjectivity of the latter, is one piece of epistemological theory about perception. And it has played a large and useful part in the development of modern physics. It has enabled the physicist to feel at ease in ignoring the whole problem of the sensible qualities of matter, as such,—which, in their concrete, purely qualitative character, are insusceptible of mathematical treatment—and to confine his attention to what is supposed to be the objective basis of our sensations,—a world in which only geometrical and quantitative, and therefore commensurable and calculable, attributes needed to be taken into account. In the seventeenth century, when the pre-suppositions and general methodology of the more fundamental of our modern sciences were receiving their formulation, they received it at the hands of men who were very greatly concerned with epistemological issues, and even with the epistemology of perception, and who conceived both inquiries as related phases of a single endeavor to clarify and set in order the whole problem of knowledge and to discriminate its parts from one another.

All this aside, moreover, it may be asked why a general indictment of the epistemology of perception should be any more damaging to one epistemological theory than another. If the whole problem ought to be avoided, there would appear to be no more occasion for realistic epistemological monism than for idealism or dualistic realism. Yet there is clearly some connection, in Woodbridge's mind, between the considerations mentioned and a rejection of both idealism and the belief in representative ideas. The connection, so far as I can make it out, seems to run as follows: Since epistemology cannot alter either the record of our actual perceptions, or the extension of our knowledge beyond the limits of the actually perceptible which is achieved for us by science; and since the hypothesis of mental representations is indispensable to neither of these two parts of our knowledge; therefore that hypothesis, at all events, is redundant and unprofitable. On the other hand, the hypotheses that there are physical objects independent of perception and that these are what we actually perceive, do not seem to be looked upon by Woodbridge as being ‘epistemological’ in any reprehensible sense. Both these beliefs seem to rest with him upon an assurance which amounts simply to a prejudgment of both issues: *viz.* to the assurance that “we cannot suppose, and there is no reason to suppose, that by the constitution of the mind we are obliged to think of things differently from the manner in which they are.”¹⁸

Some actual arguments are, however, offered to show that the “two worlds” of epistemological dualism are too numerous by half. For, it is observed, if the content of perception is composed of ideas, then the ideas in perception are precisely like the things referred to by perception. “The world we perceive may be made only of the stuff of consciousness, but then consciousness is the kind of stuff that may be condensed into a lump of sugar with which to sweeten

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

coffee." This, it will be observed, turns upon the confusion already explained above (3). Thus, "even if the two worlds are numerically distinct, they are essentially alike." But if the perceived world is essentially like the world of things, "it is the kind of world which might contain them, and does contain them continuous with itself," if the things are ever "given in representation."

A world, a representative world, which can thus so faithfully copy, even in part, another world which is somehow its cause, would appear to contain within itself all the elements necessary to show how process and result are related to each other, at least 'in representation.' And if 'in representation,' then surely the need of duplicated worlds has disappeared so far as any positive result for knowledge is concerned, for process and result would in that event, be given in a manner wherein their relation to each other could be defined. It would appear artificial and strained, therefore, if we were to continue to suppose that the problem of the relation between process and result is ultimately of an epistemological character.¹⁹

I am, I confess, not sure precisely what reasoning some of the language here is intended to convey. What seems clear, however, is that the argument now is, not that representationalism is untenable because epistemology is superfluous, but that epistemology is superfluous because representationalism is either (a) untenable, or (b) logically indistinguishable from monistic realism. If (b) is intended, I am at a loss to discover what reasons are offered for accepting such an identification of opposites. If (a) is what is really meant, no arguments for it seem to be suggested which differ in principle from those elsewhere examined in this paper.

(7) It is from idealism, and especially from the older-fashioned, Berkeleian sort of idealism, that the 'new' realists and other epistemological monists of our time have borrowed the weapons upon which they seem most to rely, in their attack upon the belief in ideas. For the original philosophical form of epistemological monism was, of course, none other

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

than Berkeley's theory; it long ago declared that there is, in our perception of sensible objects, no duality of thought and thing. Adherents of that theory have accordingly accumulated a store of well-worn objections against dualistic realism, or the doctrine of representative ideas; and these objections have simply been taken over by the monistic realists of to-day and turned to their own uses. Their position is that of men who, while resolved to be realists at all costs, are for the rest quite ready to accept most of the reasonings which were intended, by those who first devised them, to overthrow *both* dualism and realism.

For example, we have already seen Alexander arguing for the objectivity of the secondary qualities on the ground that they and primary qualities have long since been proved to stand upon exactly the same footing. But the philosopher who first professed to have proved this was Bishop Berkeley himself; and the consequence which *he* drew from it was, of course, that the two classes of sensible qualities are equally subjective. We have, again, seen Professor Dunlap reject representationalism with some scorn, on the ground (among others) that it is a cumbrous and gratuitous piece of "psychical mechanics." But this was originally one of the most characteristic of the Berkeleian criticisms upon the Lockian type of realism. The dualistic hypothesis, Berkeley felt, was a needlessly complicated one; it postulated two distinct and profoundly dissimilar entities, and a peculiar and, indeed, incomprehensible sort of relation—at once causal and cognitive—between them, to account for the fact that one entity—namely, a sensible object—appears within the circle of an individual's consciousness. The simpler, and therefore more rational, hypothesis was that precisely the object that appears is the only object that exists. Our contemporary monistic realists have but slightly rearranged the terms of the conclusion of this argument, so that it reads: the object that (independently) exists is precisely the object that appears. And the adverb which I have put in parenthesis in

this clause is in certain cases, at least with some writers, of so obscure and ill-determined a meaning, that the distinction between the realistic and the idealistic kind of epistemological monists sometimes becomes rather elusive.

Yet the argument based merely upon the superior simplicity of the monistic theory of perception is, I am afraid, hardly so serviceable for realistic as it is for idealistic uses. The reason why it is not lies in the fact that, as we have repeatedly had occasion to note, certain content which is in consciousness can not easily be credited with 'independent' existence. It apparently is only at the times when it is perceived; and its qualities are such that, when considered in connection with other contents of other consciousness, it seems incapable of assignment to public space or to any single, objective order of nature—such as the realist necessarily must suppose to be 'independently real.' In other words, it is natural to say of memory-content, of after-images, and the like, that at least their *nunc esse* is their *nunc percipi*; and of hallucinatory and dream content that their *esse* is nothing but their *percipi*. If, however, a part of what appears in consciousness is, on these grounds, held to be merely ideas, the suspicion is aroused that, even when what is in consciousness is supposed to reveal external realities, that which directly appears also consists of ideas. And this suspicion, as we have also seen, has long been felt to receive corroboration from the fact that the realist, at all events, must recognize the existence of a complicated physical mechanism intervening between the assumed object and the perception of it. But the monistic form of realism requires us to believe that the content which is admittedly mediated through all these elaborate processes is qualitatively and existentially identical with an entity which exists antecedently to and apart from this mediation.

Another form of idealistic argument against dualistic realism which has been taken over by recent realists, dwells upon the peculiar status of the external, physical object in the

dualistic scheme. Its reality is affirmed, and yet we are told that it is never immediately accessible to us. Out of a content of consciousness consisting exclusively of ideas, or intra-mental objects, we are supposed to extract both a concrete meaning for, and a proof of, the assertion of the existence of things, or extra-mental objects. This, however,—the opponent of dualism argues—is clearly an impossibility *ex definitione*. We cannot conceivably know the nature or the existence of anything which is never immediately before the mind, never actually present in consciousness at all. Idealistically applied, this reasoning obviously leads to the conclusion that only that which is in the mind can be known to exist. But conjoined with the realist's assumption that independent, non-mental things are known to exist, the reasoning leads to the conclusion that these things, so far as they are known or apprehended, are immediately before the mind, are actually present in consciousness.²⁰

Here again, however, as I have recently pointed out elsewhere, we have a case in which the weapons of the idealist are ill adapted to the warfare of the monistic realist. For he, if he is to be a realist at all, is compelled to declare that he knows that things not in consciousness exist, and that the things now in consciousness exist at other times outside of that 'relation.' This proposition would appear to be meaningless, unless it means that things not now in consciousness can in some fashion now be known or apprehended. But, manifestly, the theory that only the immediately given can be known or verified, and the theory that the existence of realities not immediately given can be known and verified, are irreconcilable. The latter is essential to any view that can be called realistic; and it destroys the premise of the present argument against dualism. The idealist himself, of course, if he is not a solipsist, can not consistently adhere to the sup-

²⁰ For an example of the use of this argument in the monistic interest, cf. Perry, in *Jour. of Philosophy*, x, 1913, p. 461. For my previous comment on this cf. *id.*, p. 568.

posed axiom that no mediate knowledge of existences is possible. Bishop Berkeley, for example, as everyone knows, had no doubt about the existence of God and of finite minds not his own, and therefore plainly departed from the epistemological 'immediatism' which served as premise for much of his idealistic argument. There is, as Montague has recently remarked, "an oasis of realism [though not necessarily of physical realism] somewhere in the mind of every idealist." There is also, and for exactly the same reason, an oasis of dualism, of some sort of representationalism, somewhere in the mind of every epistemological monist who is unwilling to accept the paradox that the only known reality is the present content of his private consciousness. To profess a knowledge of aught beyond this is to concede, once for all, the possibility that that which is known may be existentially other than anything present in consciousness at the time when it is known.

(8) More happily conceived, for monistic uses, than these injudicious borrowings from idealism to which some neo-realists have so much resorted, is an argument employed by Dunlap in his article in this *Circular*. It is designed to confute the representationalist out of his own mouth. The dualist—so runs the reasoning—urges, in objection to epistemological monism, that we can be aware, either in perception or thought, of a thing which no longer exists; from which he concludes that the thing must be represented by a present idea of it. But, the monist now replies, the dualist who raises this objection himself professes to be able to contrast this present content—sensation or percept or image—with the not-present real object. His very assertion that he knows the percept to be other than the object implies that he now has the latter as well as the former 'before the mind.' But to imply this is to concede the falsity of his objection to the monistic view, and the needlessness of the belief that content can be nothing but ideas. To prove—or even to formulate—the proposition that thoughts which are not iden-

tical with things can alone be in consciousness, he is compelled to begin by admitting that both things and thoughts can be in consciousness, and be there distinguished and compared—the premise thus contradicting the conclusion which is drawn from it. Since the dualist must, first or last, refer to absent or no-longer-existent realities, he has no right to reproach the epistemological monist for doing so without superfluous preliminaries.

This argument is a genuinely pertinent and a highly plausible one; and it is so because it expresses a very natural view about the implications of the most distinctive, and yet the most singular and paradoxical, attribute of consciousness—its power to apprehend the not present. It is, none the less, upon a misinterpretation of those implications that the argument rests. To say that one contrasts one's idea of an external and independent thing with the thing itself is not to say that the thing itself is directly given in one's consciousness, without the mediation of any idea. The realistic representationalist who declares that he knows that his representations correspond to extra-mental realities does not thereby necessarily imply that these latter are, at the same time, actually present in his mind; he means, of course, to imply the contrary, and he is not debarred from doing so. The briefest, though the least direct, way of showing that he is not so debarred, consists in pointing out that those who advance this argument against the necessity of the hypothesis of ideas, themselves distinguish, in certain cases, between an existent and their thought of that existent, without admitting that the existent in question is immediately present as a bit of content in their consciousness. One such case we have already noted; it is that of the belief in the occurrence, within the consciousness of another person, of content directly accessible only to the introspection of that person. Anyone who, while professing to know that such content exists, declares that its actual existence is not identical with anything existent in his own thought, makes precisely the same distinction as the repre-

sentationalist, and is, in fact—as has already been intimated—a representationalist, so far as this type of existent is concerned. And in making the distinction he does not, and can not, suppose that the content of his fellow's private experience after all is identically present in his own thought. The same reasoning applies to those who admit the reality, not of private content in individual minds, but of a multitude of individual thinkings, of *processes* of consciousness. If Peter's thinking is not John's thinking, and yet John professes to know that Peter's thinking is a fact, and to be himself thinking about that fact, and in doing so to be discriminating his thinking about it from the fact itself—then John clearly implies that a not-immediately-present reality may be contrasted with a present thought of it without thereby coming to be immediately present. *How* such a thing is possible may, indeed, appear a mystery; but none but the solipsist can deny that it is possible.

Another example is to be found in the case of memory. Of a fact remembered an essential attribute is its pastness; the "temporal coefficients," as Mrs. Franklin puts it, of objects of consciousness are as distinctive predicates of them as their sensible qualities. But—whatever be said of the other attributes of remembered experiences, or of objects which have ceased to be,—their pastness *as such* surely cannot be a present existence. To contrast, then, my present thought of the past with the actual past, is, once more, to make just such a distinction as is made in contrasting my thought of an entity outside of consciousness with that entity; and it is to make it without implying either that the present is actually past or the past actually present. As little need, therefore, is there to maintain that the latter contrast is possible only upon condition that what is outside of consciousness be also inside of it—in other words, that the apprehension of the external entity is direct and unmediated by ideas.

What we do in all these cases, the believer in ideas may intelligibly and consistently maintain, is after all merely to

contrast one idea with another. There is present content of consciousness, which is, in the broad sense of the term, ideas; and there are, amongst this content, ideas of the difference *between* ideas and objects in some sense or other corresponding to them. The content includes such concepts as externality, independence, otherness, pastness; and these concepts may be conjoined with other elements of content. When they are so conjoined, we have in consciousness, for example, the idea of an external, or an independent, or a past reality; and this idea, when present, has a different meaning or logical value from that which the same content has when not united with that predicate. Thus it is that we can contrast given content taken *simpliciter* and regarded as 'ideas' merely, with the same content taken as external or as past, and regarded as distinct from present ideas—and yet, throughout, never *actually* transcend the circle of our individual consciousness, or dispense with ideas, or translate ourselves out of the present. For content to *mean* externality, and for it to *be* external, are quite two things; just as for it to mean a past event and to be a past event are two things. Bits of present experience—to use a metaphor of which Professor James was fond—'point' beyond their own limits; but they do not *get* beyond their own limits, for the pointing is itself a part of the present experience. And all mediate knowing consists necessarily of experiences of precisely this type.

That the 'self-transcendence' of our thought need consist in no more than a present-pointing-beyond-the-present, is shown by the fact that all the indicia upon which we rely in affirming any particular sort of transcendence (such as pastness) might be given in consciousness, even though no object transcending our present consciousness in that particular way existed. Thus a newly created mind might be endowed with a memory; it would have in its consciousness a mass of content bearing pastness as its temporal coefficient, but corresponding to nothing whatever in any real past. If it be objected that, supposing this to be true, the truth of solipsism

would also be possible, *i. e.*, abstractly conceivable, the answer must be that the truth of solipsism is abstractly conceivable. It would, however, upon the present hypothesis, be in no wise logically inferrible. On the other hand, we have already seen that, upon the hypothesis that all knowledge must consist in the immediate presence of the reality known, nothing but solipsism is inferrible.²⁰ And that is the ultimate objection to all consistent epistemological monism. Whether it call itself realistic or idealistic, it cannot, without abandoning its principles, attach any real meaning to the proposition that I at present know that which does not at present exist; or to the proposition that my knowledge refers to beings (such as other persons) whose existence never wholly coincides with, never is perfectly reducible to, anything which occurs as a datum within my own experience. It is, after all, more satisfactory to hold a view which treats this contrast as a distinction between the meaning of two ideas both present in my consciousness, than to hold a view which, when duly analyzed, implies that the contrast has no meaning at all.

It is time to conclude this inquiry, which has run to an unanticipated length. What I have here tried to do has been, first, to show the significance and the historic relations of the contemporary revolt against ideas; second, to define the relations of this revolt to certain kindred, yet not identical, movements; third, to exhibit the considerations which have engendered the belief in ideas, and which, accordingly, must be disposed of by those who repudiate that belief; fourth, to make it evident that the principal logical motives which have inspired the revolt, while they have been partially suggested by confusions in the older way of thinking about ideas, do not

²⁰ To save the reader the trouble of recalling a somewhat involved argument, the essential proof of this conclusion may be here repeated in a sentence: The epistemological monist declares that whenever he perceives or thinks of a thing, that thing itself is immediately present in consciousness; it follows that he can never think of anything which is not immediately present in consciousness.

suffice to justify the conclusion reached; and lastly, to point out that the attempt to conceive of all knowledge as 'immediate,' and thus to dispense with all such dualism as that involved in the theory of representative ideas, is inconsistent with the belief in other minds having private and purely introspectible content—and is, indeed, inconsistent with the realism professed by most of those who have recently assailed that theory. For these reasons, and for others not here indicated, I can not think the hypothesis of ideas—of non-physical and non-objective entities, which are, in some instances, capable of affording a mediate acquaintance with entities not themselves—to be in quite so forlorn a case as many acute and ingenious philosophers of our time suppose.



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